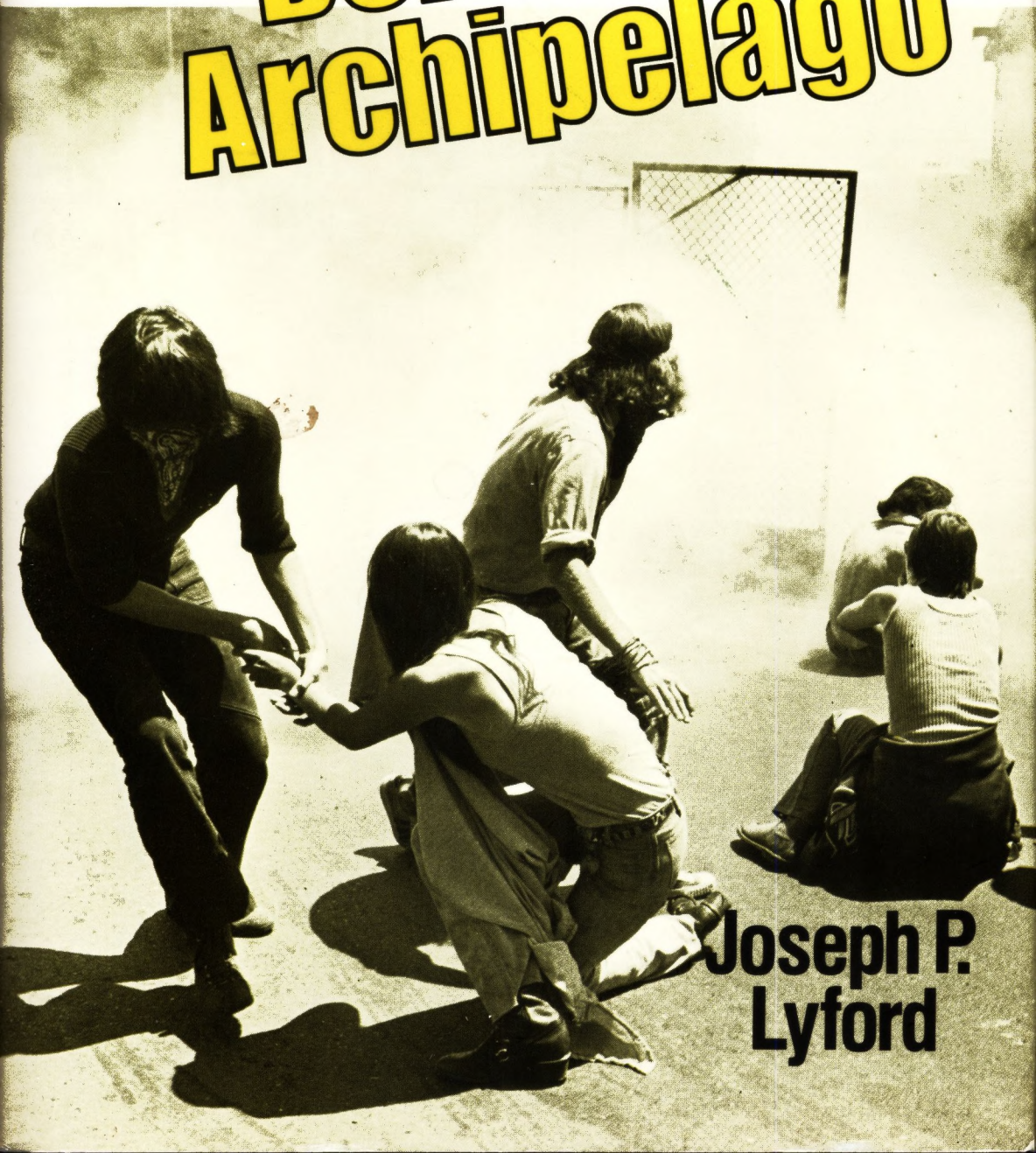
The Berkeley Archipelago



Joseph P. Lyford

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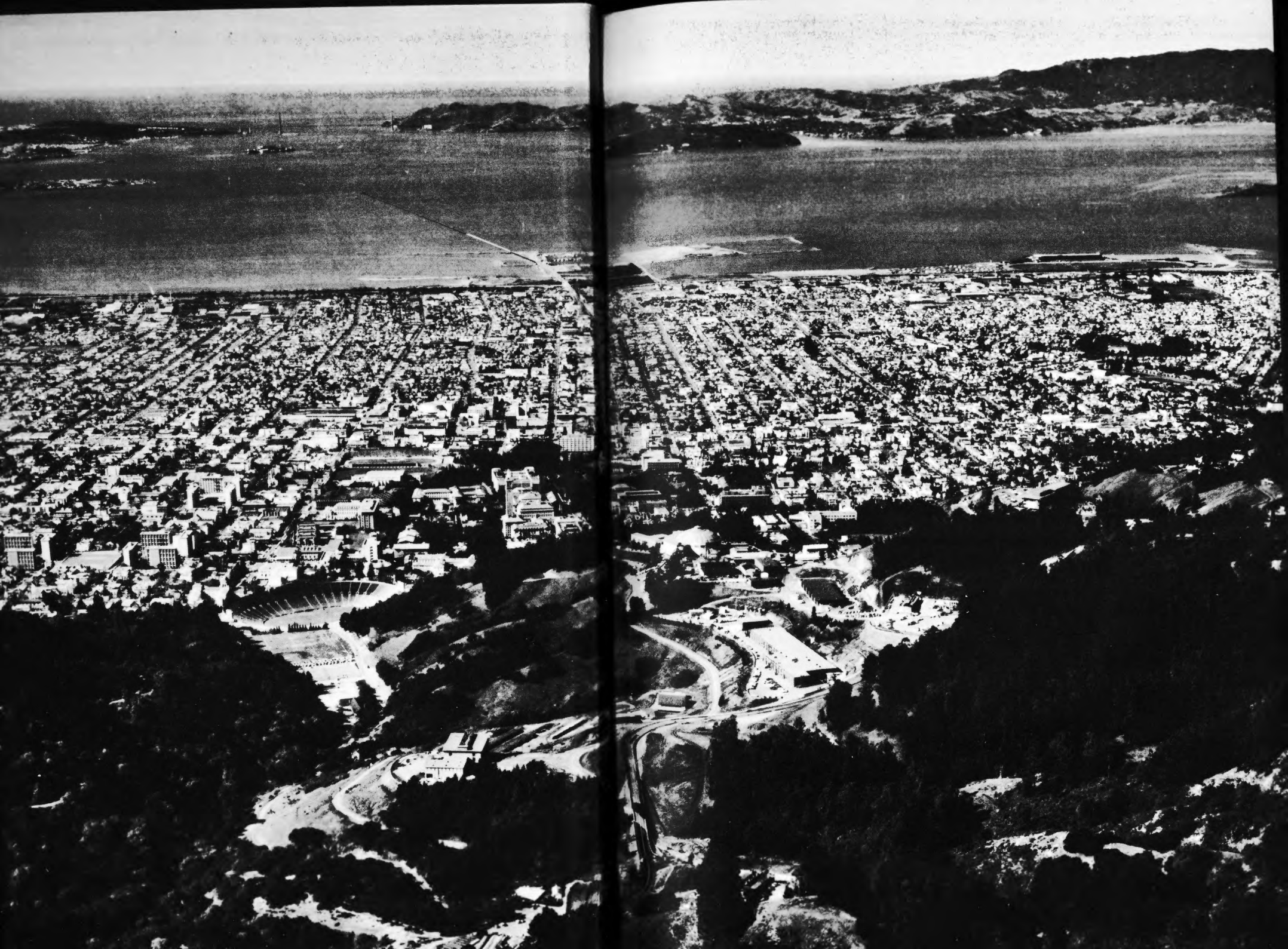
The Berkeley Archipelago

Joseph P. Lyford

Despite the advantages of a large and distinguished university and a government that for years was a model for other cities, Berkeley in the late '60s and early '70s was the scene of violent and irrational riots which destroyed all sense of community.

Joseph Lyford, a professor of journalism at the University of California at Berkeley, has inquired into the causes of this destruction. He has described the riots and demonstrations in graphic detail. But the real importance of this book is its penetrating analysis of this singularly important community and the state of mind which made the riots possible.

How does Berkeley now manage its own affairs? Lyford goes directly to the people of Berkeley — students, policemen, teachers, housewives, politicians, businessmen and women. They describe a city that is now a chain of isolated neighborhoods where politics is the art of emphasizing differences rather than areas of compromise, where a once lively debate has now been replaced by bitterness and mistrust, and where criminal conduct is often regarded as mere political dissent. Lyford also sees signs of recovery: Berkeley may be regaining its equilibrium, if not its sense of community.



Joseph P. Lyford

The Berkeley Archipelago

Regnery Gateway
Chicago

To Robert Maynard Hutchins

There was this difference between him and the political leaders of his time: they considered the limited and evanescent present while he set himself a more difficult and dangerous task—an effort to foresee the future of this country and to broaden the freedoms on which its institutions were built. He was a prophet in his own generation and a matchless teacher in mine.

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Acknowledgments

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My students in the Graduate School of Journalism over the past several years in a course entitled *Reporting on the American Community and Urban Affairs*, focusing mainly on Berkeley, San Francisco, and Oakland, since they were the closest at hand. We shared each other's experiences and speculated on the meaning of what we saw. I was refreshed by their insights.

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Introduction

Cities. If cities are seen as something other than merely geographical and political entities inhabited by crowds of people and administered by city managers, mayors, various boards, commissions and departments, then a lot of new ideas about how to look at them and what to write about them will occur to any journalist who thinks persistently about the subject. Obviously the city is a stage with many plays going on at once, but most of them are ignored by the press because the people in the casts are thought to be insignificant compared to city councilmen and other pillars of society. Yet these insignificant people are playing real-life roles with original scripts, which is what makes the plays unpredictable and exciting.

Anthropologists know better than journalists that any community is a complicated system of interlocking systems, usually invisible, that don't stop running when the offices close downtown. These systems involve decision-making, land use, transportation, economic development, planning, health care, taxation, social interaction, education, and organized political and religious rituals. The systems cannot be understood by reading what a public official, a lobbyist or a professor says about them. Very often such people are out of touch or they are part of an apparatus designed to conceal rather than reveal the truth. If journalists are to have anything important to say about the systems, they have to drill a hole in the ice and fish for themselves.

The city is also a concatenation of problems, controversies and issues. Most of them—except for loud in-group arguments between politicians—are bubbling and cooking well out of the visual range of the typical city editor's binoculars. The people involved are very inconspicu-

ous: from the editor's perch they look like ants. Closer inspection reveals processes which are slowly changing the urban environment, eroding old forms and creating new patterns. Magnified, these happenings may reveal hidden strengths in a society or they may turn out to be gruesome and vicious enough to make the front page of the *National Enquirer*. The doctor who finds it inconvenient to answer a hospital's plea to treat a desperately injured girl; a family of criminals who systematically pillage an entire neighborhood of black families; a chain of circumstances that lead to the murder by heroin of a 12-year-old Harlem child. Joseph Lelyveld's *New York Times* story of the last-named episode is a classic; his obituary for Walter Vandermeer may yet become the obituary for the city in which he died.[1]

A city is also a psychological phenomenon that might be administered more effectively by a psychiatrist than a politician. In some ways a city is simply a figment of the imagination of thousands of isolated people whose perception of their environment is based on superstition, rumor, wide-awake nightmares, what they read in the papers, and what they see on television. That this perception may have no relation to reality at any given moment does not alter the fact that it can affect the behavior of vast numbers of people and eventually transform a city from what it is into what it is believed to be. The people afflicted by these misperceptions are not all poverty-stricken and uneducated. Some of the wildest superstitions and fears are entertained by people who have comfortable incomes and university degrees, but who read a lot of nonsense and believe it.

There are countless definitions of the city. To an inhabitant a city is both an abstraction and collection of personal experiences which determine how he votes or whether he will vote at all; whether he will stay or leave; what type of education he wants for his children. A city is a labyrinthine network which he tries to navigate, encountering as he does so, rules and systems that work quite differently from the way they are supposed to work.

A city is a collection of neighborhoods, blocks, crossroads. Cities are really archipelagoes, chains of islands inhabited by clans and families who often as not are suspicious of each other and who make alliances not on the basis of common purposes but on the basis of common enemies. Fear, rather than a sense of civic responsibility, is often the motive that propels them into political activism. Cities are also museums—galleries of portraits and landscapes, libraries of people—repositories of very delicate impressions and messages about the subliminal side of our society.

The elusive quality of the city makes it harder to analyze. But it is a

[1]Joseph Lelyveld (with Charlayne Hunter), "Obituary of a Heroin User Who Died at 12," *New York Times*, Jan. 12, 1970.

richer subject to write about precisely because of its many attributes. Journalists ought to invent as many plausible definitions of the city as they can. The more the journalist reflects on the nature of cities, the more he will value the simple oral autobiographies of the people who live in them and who, as they move around, draw a map which guides their actions.

The information these people can provide is valuable for precisely the reason that it is so often rejected by social scientists. These witnesses accumulate their evidence, not with any design or purpose, but simply as a by-product of living. Journalists who have set out to compile their biographies have given us the most truthful and compelling accounts of urban life. We learn much more from the chronicles of the London poor by Charles Booth and Henry Mayhew (and Charles Dickens) than we do from the London newspapers of the day. These writers shared the historians' respect for individual lives as keys to understanding a whole social epoch, but they surpassed the historians in one respect. While the historian generally confined his attention to great men, these journalists inquired into the lives of chimney sweeps, beggars, crossing guards, and all the other victims of the established institutions of the time. They reported on the people underneath the world, not on top of it.

The press, in its preoccupation with politics and disaster, generally ignores the authentic nobodies whose origins, habits, and preferences are the genes that determine the character and destiny of cities. It is absurd, when one thinks about it, that a newspaper which presumably exists for its readers should be removed from their level of human experience except when they are raped or murdered or when they force themselves into the light by rioting. If a publisher is interested in bringing the various populations of a city within hailing distance of each other, then printing news about all of them is a first requirement.

Much of the foregoing may be regarded as irrelevant by many editors and publishers on the grounds that it is sociology, not journalism. What, they may ask, has searching for definitions of the city, inquiring into the hidden dimensions of the city, writing about ordinary rather than extraordinary events and people have to do with reporting the news? The reply is that journalists, like scientists, cannot write about a subject before they understand it, and they cannot understand it unless they think hard about its many dimensions before, during and after their investigations. Cities are especially difficult to comprehend because their cells are constantly changing. Reporters who ask searching questions about the nature of cities become considerably more valuable to their papers than those who don't. The most important result of on-the-job thinking, however, is the psychological change that takes place when the reporter becomes a discoverer rather than a recorder.

Asking questions and speculating about the involuntary processes that shape the city is only the beginning. Reporters must explore the archipelagoes to take soundings, measure the tides, make notes on the mental and physical environment in which the inhabitants of these islands find themselves, and to listen and look for subtle differences.

This is what I have tried to do in the city of Berkeley for the past ten years, in the hope that the experience could give me a clearer idea of how people live in one middle-sized American city—how well they have succeeded or how badly they have failed to achieve the good life, and some of the reasons things have turned out as they have.

In my exploration I have tried to avoid giving the impression that Berkeley is unique, on the one hand, or typical of American cities, on the other. Either term is misleading. Comparisons certainly come to mind. But cities are like the aggregations of human beings that inhabit them. They have a peculiar nature all their own. At the same time they bear certain family resemblances to other communities, small and large, within a shared social, political and economic system. That is true of Berkeley, where I found echoes of many other towns and cities I've lived in and studied. Occasionally I have pointed out differences and similarities, but for the most part I have concentrated on describing as best I could what lay before me, in the hope that my reporting will provide the reader—with his own community in mind—the basis for making his own comparisons.

Why Berkeley? It is unfortunate that the events of the last decade which called national attention to Berkeley have also obscured, even blotted out, its importance as a city in which the main currents of U.S. life—intellectual, social and political—converge and react upon each other. Berkeley isn't important simply because it was the heart of some of the most prolonged and highly publicized protests against the Vietnam War and what were seen at the time as outmoded and oppressive social and economic practices.

Berkeley's deeper significance as an American community is that it is both a "national" city—drawing a constantly changing population from every class and every geographical area in the United States—and a local community charged with a responsibility to govern itself while attempting to satisfy the demands of an intensely cosmopolitan citizenry. Unlike such national cities as Washington, D.C. and New York City, whose huge size and enormous bureaucracies bury the character of the people they govern, Berkeley is a place where these currents and the people who ride them lie close to the surface. Hence they are more easily observed. Berkeley is a simplified model of a modern metropolis, not typical of any one city, but scaled down to manageable proportions.

In quite another sense, Berkeley is a city (or a town, as some Berkeleyans are wont to regard it) within a city, close to the center of one of the fastest growing urban regions in the United States. As such its attempts to preserve its physical character and the integrity of its political, educational and social institutions in the face of overwhelming pressure should be interesting to inhabitants of other communities which face similar threats to their survival. Berkeley is no exception to the trend in many U.S. cities, large and small, of the citizens to isolate themselves by race, age, political affiliation, or economic status because of fear and distrust or ignorance of one another's capacity for giving as well as taking—a side effect of a political system which gives greater emphasis to competing than cooperating.

Berkeley is also important because it is the location of one of the largest and most distinguished universities in the world. The manner in which this university has responded to its local situation, and the way the citizens of Berkeley have reacted to the university's presence, may shed some light on broader questions. What responsibility, for instance, does a great university and a progressively-minded community have to make use of their joint resources in a creative way to advance the general welfare? And if this university and this community do not respond sensitively to each other and the relationship becomes injurious to both, what are the implications of this failure with regard to the role of the university as an educational, moral and political force in American life?

Berkeley is also significant for other reasons having nothing to do with its supposed hospitality to ideas which would seem at least mildly subversive elsewhere. In addition to facing problems most other cities also have to cope with (crime, racism, a shortage of housing, a budgetary crisis, a declining school population, etc.), Berkeley is a prototype of a nonpartisan electoral process the unhealthy effects of which on local political parties have not been fully realized.

And Berkeley is an illustration of what may happen when the free flow of ideas is interrupted by the politics of verbal and physical violence. One significant result of this rupture of the democratic dialogue in Berkeley has been the construction of what Walter Lippmann has called a "pseudo-environment," in which social, political and governmental decisions are made in response to a fictionalized version of reality rather than the real world itself. Berkeley's pseudo-environment is mainly the work of the two comparatively small but sophisticated liberal and radical groupings that share political power and in the process have generated the impression that Berkeley is not only different from other communities but is actually estranged from them.

These dominant left and liberal groupings are, for the most part, in a

relatively secure economic position, either through personal wealth or through access to public funds—as is the case with the state-subsidized university community and the counter-culture population which receives a minimal but subsistance level support from public sources. As a result of its protected economic position, this political elite can treat the political process as a game, full of satisfying symbolic rituals and played with other peoples' money.

The main building block for the pseudo-environment this political elite has built for itself is the stereotype, a mental device which makes it possible to disregard facts which do not dovetail neatly with political prejudices.

The effects of this tendency to pass over unwelcome truths is evident in almost all aspects of Berkeley life, most notably in its policies on education, land use, the operations of city government, law enforcement, housing, redevelopment, the budget, affirmative action and economic development.

The pseudo-environment that has emerged in Berkeley may be qualitatively different from a Boston or a Washington, D.C., but in another sense it is not untypical of many other cities where the social consequences of discrepancies between the real world and the fictionalized world are not visited upon the political elite, but upon those who are not politically influential or financially secure—who cannot send their children to private school if things don't work out, move into a commune, buy a house somewhere else, or (if he is a student), shrug his shoulders secure in the knowledge that he will be gone in three or four years.

For this reason, Berkeley's peculiar type of pseudo-environment has had a remarkable staying power. How long it will last is anybody's guess. According to Lippmann, pseudo-environments are not indestructible:

> It may be a long while before there is a noticeable break in the texture of the fictitious world. But when the stimulus of the pseudo-fact results in action on things or other people, contradiction soon develops. Then comes the sensation of butting one's head up against a stone wall, of learning by experience, and witnessing Herbert Spencer's tragedy of the murder of a Beautiful Theory by a Brutal Gang of Facts.[2]

The most compelling witnesses to the discrepencies between Berkeley's pseudo-environment and the way things really work in the city are the citizens themselves. Sometimes they have been people who have had some influence on the course of events—a politician or an administrator

[2]Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion* (New York: Free Press, 1966), p. 10.

or a board member who is disturbed at what he or she sees and tries to do something about it. But more often than not it is the people who are not heard from very much who have given me the most revealing glimpses of their city: teachers, social workers, students, policemen and other city employees, volunteers, criminals, families, small businesspersons, crusaders, street people—in short, those people whose lives form the texture and pattern of urban life. I only regret that, for reasons of space, I could use only a fraction of their testimony.

1 The Landscape

A Patch of White. If there is no fog, and the wind has blown the fumes of half a million automobiles far out over the Pacific, the city is easy to see. From San Francisco across the Bay to the west, it looks like an intricately designed carpet unrolling gradually from the shoreline until it tilts abruptly at a steep angle against the Berkeley hills. It isn't hard to imagine, looking down from these hills, that you are hovering over the city in a balloon. The people of San Francisco and Berkeley have a daily mutual exchange of views, spectacular bird's-eye ones. At sunrise, when Berkeley is a vague shadow beneath the black hills, San Francisco is floating, pink, luminous. Then, at sunset, Berkeley becomes a red and orange mirror and San Francisco is the silhouette.

All sorts of things are visible from the Berkeley hills. Below Grizzly Peak Boulevard, which runs along the crest of the hills, is the University of California campus with its Venetian campanile and a stadium where four or five times a year the annual football commotions send sound waves up through Strawberry Canyon and the University's Botanical Gardens spread out on the hillsides. Looking west, the eye can travel down Berkeley streets until they terminate in a district of light industries bordering the Bayshore Freeway. University Avenue, the main east-west street, starts at the western end of the campus and ends at the foot of a long pier that reaches out a quarter of a mile into the Bay. The pier is a Berkeley institution, a good place for walking, fishing, looking at sunsets, and philosophizing.

Atmospheric conditions play strange tricks with the prospect from the hills. I have seen the Berkeley pier when it looked as if it were standing on

end, like the column of a giant crane parked near the water. When the air is perfectly transparent, San Francisco, the Golden Gate Bridge and Alcatraz Island are so close that it seems as if you could land on them by just taking a running jump off the end of the pier. On other days, these places retreat toward the horizon or seem to be suspended above it. On hazy days, the western, flat parts of Berkeley appear to detach themselves from the rest of the city, like offshore islands. This optical illusion suggests something about the character of the city, a clue to its personality—a city divided.

One of the better views of the city and the Bay is from a sharp bend of Grizzly Peak Boulevard with a turnout for no more than one or two cars. The view that I remember most vividly from there, however, has nothing to do with landscapes and sunsets. I remember it from more than a dozen years ago, about twilight, when the steep descent beneath me was in shadow. I was about to turn away from the view when I noticed a small, light-colored patch at the bottom of a canyon filled with greasewood and brush. The spot was an automobile, a white convertible, right side up, with a human being sitting behind the wheel—as if the driver were waiting for someone

The police had already discovered the car, I learned, and next morning they were on the scene with a tow truck that winched the car up on a long cable. The driver had been removed. One of the policemen told me the woman had probably lived for several hours after the accident. In a sense she had been waiting for somebody, for help that never came.

The memory of that accident has stayed with me because it symbolized something about Berkeley in the 1960s. The woman in the convertible had gone over the cliff during what might have been called an era of falling bodies, with people almost always arriving on the scene too late to do anything but clean up the mess. Sometimes the mess was private and psychological, in which case the event went by unnoticed except by the relatives and close friends of the victim. Some of these victims died emotionally, and quite a few of them are still around in Berkeley, out of sight.

The publicly-identified victims were the ones who destroyed themselves in full view. One of these falling bodies went past my window on the third floor of Barrows Hall, the roof of which was finally sealed off to prevent suicides. Another body catapulted itself, naked, in the midst of an LSD trip, through a plate glass window into Telegraph Avenue.

These descents did not always occur without advance notice. One bright morning about a dozen years ago I joined a crowd that was peering up at a young man in blue overalls who had climbed over a railing of the third story balcony of Eshleman Hall and was swinging on the outside like a chimpanzee, shouting that he was in love and on his way to heaven.

After a while he made it all come true by letting go. When he landed on his back and bounced and turned into a body bag, a young woman next to me informed me that he had been high on LSD and that she was his lover. Then, without even looking at him—he was still moaning on the pavement—she walked away.

The era of falling bodies was not a local phenomenon, of course. A President had been assassinated, his brother and Martin Luther King, Jr., would soon be murdered, Malcolm X had been slain, and the techniques of large-scale slaughter were being perfected in Southeast Asia. The power of suggestion was impelling a few young civilians to stockpile their own ordinance and manufacture bombs, some of which would be set off in Berkeley. Another kind of time bomb was the infiltration of the flower children's culture by people who dressed like hippies, spoke the language, and affected the same life styles but who came to Berkeley strictly for business—the peddling of hard drugs, the selling of bodies, armed robbery, rape, and murder. In Berkeley's free-spirited climate of the sixties, not many people realized fully what had happened until many young and trusting people had been set upon and severely injured.

I didn't suspect the whole truth any more than most people until the day Martin Luther King was assassinated. After I heard about it, I went for a long walk in the campus. While I was waiting for the light on Telegraph Avenue to change, I noticed a young long-haired couple in faded Levis and embroidered shirts beside me. I asked them if they had heard the terrible news. What terrible news? they asked. When I told them, they stared at me for a few seconds, then, as the light changed and they stepped off the curb, the man looked me full in the face and said, "Fuck you, nigger lover, fuck you."

After that I noticed things I hadn't seen before about what was happening, what was coming down. It was the beginning of my exploration of the Berkeley archipelago.

A Chain of Islands. The way one looks at life or a situation or a city depends, to put it into Berkeley language, on where you're coming from and where you're at. A man's perception of a place also depends on whether he's arriving, leaving or staying, according to Howard Clark, a longtime inhabitant of Telegraph Avenue who has done a lot of coming and going the last 30 years or so. For every time Howard has bid goodbye forever to Berkeley and driven off with his dog in an old Volkswagen microbus which he says runs on pineapple power, he has returned to settle down finally and try to locate old friends.

Like everyone else, Howard has his own singular view of what constitutes a city. From what he has said in various conversations we've had, I

get the impression that he thinks of the city as a psychological trip, maybe a figment of the imagination, or an accumulation of experiences that grows like coral until it suddenly pops above the surface and forms an island. Howard interprets Berkeley as if it were a series of dreams.

For those who require a more down-to-earth description of Berkeley, it is a population center of slightly less than 103,000 located on the East side of the San Francisco Bay in a huge, expanding metropolitan region dominated by Oakland. Like Oakland, it is a multiracial city. Berkeley is two-thirds Caucasian, 20 percent black, 9.6 percent of Asian origin, 5 percent of Spanish origin, and 4.3 percent others.

At Berkeley's core is the semiautonomous principality of the University of California with an enrollment of nearly 30,000 students. What makes the population of Berkeley highly unusual is its disproportionate number of very young and very old people. On the one hand, the young adults in the 18-29 range make up nearly 40 percent of the population, and they constitute a majority of the citizens of voting age, a political substratum that exerts a decisive influence in city elections. On the other hand, half of the white population, the largest racial group, is over 50 years old, with 20 percent of them over 65.

Governing all these people is a City Council, a Mayor, several Council-appointed boards and commissions, and a City Manager. The money to drive this government apparatus was generated until 1978 in a large part by a property tax which is among the highest in the state, and which falls heavily on the owners of expensive houses in the hill areas, several clusters of shopping centers scattered throughout the city, and a band of factories that stretches along the western edge of town.[1] One explanation for the high tax rate is that the proprietors of the city's most impressive chunks of real estate are exempt from taxation. First and foremost of these proprietors is the University of California, which in addition to its large campus owns many hundreds of acres of open space in the hills.

Neither the University nor the many educational and religious institutions that have located on its periphery, such as the Graduate Theological Union, which spreads itself out over an area called Holy Hill, contribute to the cost of the city services they use. This is a source of great annoyance to Berkeleyans who feel that they are overtaxed to defray the housekeeping expenses of these institutions.

Although Berkeley is part of a metropolitan region, some areas look like wedges of suburbia and their residents often behave like suburbanites. To

[1]In June 1978 California voters passed Proposition 13, the Jarvis-Gann Initiative, which by reducing property taxes about 60 percent, has drastically cut back the tax base on which municipal services depend.

Berkeleyans who have a tendency to look down on the suburbanites as people who haven't the intellectual vigor to put up with the rigors and challenges of city life, such a comparison is invariably astonishing and irritating. Yet their many neighborhood organizations devote themselves to securing and preserving the same amenities that middle-income people "flee" to the suburbs to find: safe, well-lighted and untravelled streets; protection against real estate developers; "quality education"; open space; the pleasant feeling that comes with recognizing their neighbors in the local grocery. (For clothing, hardware, and other department store items, many of these Berkeleyans drive to the huge shopping plazas in neighboring communities which are patronized by the suburbanites.)

The well-to-do neighborhoods pretty well fit the ideal prescription of tree-lined streets, single-family houses, and occasional low-rise apartment buildings. The big houses in the Claremont-Elmwood and Uplands areas a few blocks southeast of the campus have their counterparts, in size if not in style in Winnetka, Illinois, or Darien, Connecticut. The populous areas on the northern and southern borders of the university campus, occupied mainly by students and white families, do not give an impression of congestion. The occasional three- and four-story apartment buildings, mixed in with detached houses, would not look out of place in a Westchester County suburb of New York. Further away from the campus in any direction the city takes on the aspect of intimate neighborhoods except for the commercial districts along College, Telegraph, Shattuck, Sacramento, Solano, and San Pablo Avenues, and the low-profile industrial district that borders the freeway along the bay.

Although the city's black, low-income population is mainly confined to the south and west flatlands, there are black middle-class neighborhoods of single-family homes and small but carefully tended lots where real estate values have doubled and tripled in the past decade. Even in the city's most deprived parts of town, densities are low, and there is plenty of sky and space. The migrant from St. Louis or Baltimore would find nothing in these areas remotely suggestive of the racial ghettoes associated with the decaying cores of older and larger cities.

By the time of the 1970 census, residents in the census tracts with the second highest percentage of blacks (85%) in 1970 had a median income (approximately $10,000) substantially higher than the median incomes in all of the city's racially integrated tracts, and more than the median incomes in several tracts populated predominantly by whites. (At the same time, a $10,000 median income was only approximately half the median income in the city's eight most affluent census tracts. And the percentage of people living below the poverty line in all but the wealthiest black districts ranged from 10% to 20%.) In all but the poorest of the "black"

census tracts, median income ranged from $7,600 to $9,603, a range about equal to that of all the racially integrated tracts and several "white" tracts. (By 1980, integration in the above black tracts had begun.)

On the surface, Berkeley would seem to come as close to the idea of a pleasant and manageable community as is possible for a medium-sized city enmeshed in an expanding metropolitan region. And in fact a very large number of Berkeley people of all descriptions think that their community—cities like San Francisco and Paris notwithstanding—is the only place in the world worth living in. This enthusiasm is voiced by two classes of people usually thought of as having little in common—the huge family of the young and newly-arrived in search of the special university experience and the freestyle adventure which Berkeley promises, and those much older people who, having spent most of their lives in the city, have memories and loyalties that form an unbreakable Berkeley attachment.

But there are plaintive undertones. If one listens carefully to the older settlers, much of the time they seem to be rejoicing over a city that used to be or ought to be. And in the past decade it has become apparent that the Berkeley ardor among the young has a way of dimming as time goes by. Many of the young leave soon—pushed out by waves of new and younger people. To some of those who remain, passing into their thirties, living in Berkeley becomes an end in itself, although the days have passed when everything seemed possible and the world was paying attention.

Although politically the aging young are beginning to sound more like their weatherbeaten fellow citizens, this partial merging of attitudes is unconscious and has produced no strong feeling of comradeship. The old and the young still entertain the conventional antagonisms towards each other, divided from each other by age and outlook on life. Ironically, the feelings the old and the young do share in common have an unmistakable tinge of conservatism and defensiveness. They both want Berkeley to remain a city of comfortable houses (preferably shingled Maybeck or Victorian gingerbread), serene and open landscapes and placid streets untroubled by anybody's automobile but their own. And both the young and the old are worried about crime (in January 1979, not an unusual month, there were 1,000 serious crimes committed, including five rapes and one murder), and about "outsiders." They are not just apprehensive about the wrong sort of people spoiling their neighborhoods. They are worried about too many people of any sort moving in.

This is the impression generated by the comments heard in meetings where people from the neighborhoods gather to discuss ways of preserving the local environment. The people who express these attitudes are for the most part whites. They are citizens protecting an investment. Their

picture of the ideal city and their priority lists have the widest currency because they are articulate and politically sophisticated.

Their priorities do not always correspond with those of many other people who are coming from a different direction, who are "at" a different place in terms of status, income and geography. Aside from a fear of crime which permeates almost every part of the city, the people who live in the "flat lands" west of 10th Street, many of whom are black, most of whom are not well-off but who are out of earshot of the university community, have different concerns. If the black people of South and West Berkeley were prone to vocalizing at public meetings, it would be clear that the word "neighborhood" does not have the same connotations it does in the reaches of the Berkeley hills. West of 10th Street a neighborhood is often something to be endured, not preserved. The inhabitants are up in arms not only about burglars and rapists, but also about the packs of stray dogs and prostitutes, broken sidewalks, the abandoned Santa Fe railroad tracks, and unemployment. Unlike their more affluent fellow citizens, they are not concerned about apartment houses and fast food restaurants. Whatever hopes the badly-housed might have of improving their living arrangements depends on the construction of government-subsidized (the federal administration has no such subsidy plan at present), multiple-unit dwellings, preferably located in a few open spaces in middle-class white neighborhoods to the northwest. Such housing would be fought tooth and nail by property owners in these areas.

There are many examples of the difference between how the flatlanders view the world and how their fellow citizens uptown see things. Residents in one area of North Berkeley tried, almost successfully, to block a permit for a McDonald's in a neighboring commercial zone on the grounds that, in addition to causing litter and attracting more automobile traffic, its menu was unhealthy. Only after a prolonged struggle was the applicant granted his permit, despite the fact that he had operated a McDonald's franchise on San Pablo Avenue that had proved to be a clean and popular eating place for low-income families.

Even attitudes towards the automobile vary, depending on where a person is "at." Residents of the exclusive Claremont-Elmwood area at the base of the hills don't want any more "regionally oriented" businesses, such as supermarkets and banks, because they draw customers in automobiles from other parts of town. Low-income people in the San Pablo Avenue district would consider banks and Safeways, which don't ordinarily locate in depressed areas, as neighborhood conveniences. As for automobiles, far from damning them as an undiluted environmental menace, people in the flatlands fortunate enough to own one treat them with respect, wash them on Sundays, and regard them as a means of

getting to work and as partial compensation for undesirable living space.

Since the flatlanders' perspectives rarely surface in hearings on the city's new master plan or before city agencies like the Board of Adjustment, which handles zoning matters, they have relatively little influence on the debates that agitate the more affluent sectors of the city. In prime residential areas the threat of too many people moving in and too many automobiles has formed alliances between strange political bedfellows. One of the city's former police chiefs has commented a number of times on this singular union, long before it became politically apparent.

"The radicals and the conservatives have finally gotten together on one thing," he says. "They all want Berkeley to look like it did 40 years ago."

The Berkeley Tribes. Berkeley's very success in preserving so much of its ancient character has intensified the pressures which would transform it into something different. Desirability stimulates desire. Outsiders want to share in some of the city's benefits or to exploit them, to work, study, circulate, shop, and be entertained there. With such a waiting line, the present placeholders feel squashed, threatened, defensive. The city is a theater with not enough seats to go around and the people with tickets understandably don't want the playhouse enlarged. What happens in such a situation is that some people start scalping the tickets, which means buying low and selling high.

Berkeley homeowners are extremely nervous about what has happened to towns around them that have been seized without warning or invented overnight by real estate developers. Berkeleyans were provided a few years ago with a particularly alarming example of how high-handed these interests can become in Walnut Creek, a town that mushroomed into a city in half a dozen years. There, a real estate corporation obtained permission to build 1,200 houses on the slopes of a 3,000-foot-high mountain. Faced with opposition from environmentalists and homeowners, the corporation hired unemployed construction workers at five dollars an hour to invade supermarkets and harass people who were circulating petitions for a referendum on the plan—even shoving pieces of paper over the petitions as people were about to sign.

Protectionist thinking is not limited to the ultraconservatives. Many of the aging young who in the sixties and early seventies provided the troops for the assault on the Berkeley establishment are talking about maintaining the desirability of the neighborhood. Their protectionism may go further than a campaign to prevent the construction of an apartment house. A counter-culture commune on Parker Street has attempted to prevent migration of people to its block whose political views it does not agree with, and a College Street businessman would like to bar the sale of

a piece of property in his neighborhood to adherents of the Reverend Moon because he doesn't like their politics.

If Berkeley were a homogeneous community, it might respond to outsiders the way wealthy, one-class suburbs do. But the city is dozens of political and economic islands, inhabited by groups which perceive their welfare to be threatened by other groups. The increase in the number of neighborhood organizations has intensified these island rivalries over housing, zoning, code enforcement, and traffic issues.

The dilemma poses special problems for liberals who say they want more housing for low-income people, yet who oppose housing on open space; who attack landlords for violations of the housing code, but who oppose strict code enforcement for communes and tenant-occupied buildings; who want to get automobiles off the street, but who are unwilling to get along without their own one or two cars. When one property owner, prominent in the progressive movement, was asked what could be done about the housing shortage, he replied, "What shortage? Why build more housing? Everybody here has a place. More housing just brings in more people, and more people is what we don't need."

Such exclusionary attitudes are reinforced by other currents in Berkeley life. Although segregation is officially and universally disapproved of, self-segregation has its fervent and numerous admirers. Berkeley High School and the University of California campus, for instance, house organizations that restrict their membership to a certain race, ethnic background or sex. Those that compete in political campaigns ask for support of their candidates because they are black, Chicano or Asian. Such appeals are justified as attempts to create a greater sense of racial pride and self-awareness.

Many Berkeleyans also segregate themselves according to their political views. Although there are no rules preventing radicals and conservatives from talking or socializing with each other, they rarely indulge in such forms of communication. In a community that takes its politics very seriously many of the people most into politics do not feel comfortable without a proper list of enemies. They tend to choose their friends on the basis of the adversaries they have in common.

The largest segregated enclave in the city is the University. The inhabitants of this enclave exert a major influence on the economic and political life of the city, but with the exception of a few hundred students and a handful of faculty who are involved in community activities, they are generally unaware of the city's character.

All of these patterns of segregation are reinforced by the manner in which information is disseminated through the press, radio and television. The main—in most cases the only—source of regular news for the Uni-

versity population is the off-campus, student-run *Daily Californian.* The result of such near total dependence on a single newspaper which in the past has evinced a bias in favor of radical politics in both its news and editorial columns is that most students get a one-sided view of the outer community.

Those citizens who are not in the *Daily Californian's* sphere of gravity get a different picture of what is taking place. Indeed, many of them may not get any picture at all. The circulation of the *Independent and Gazette,* (which has served Berkeley for 103 years) despite an excellent editorial staff, once dropped to below 15,000 in a city with a population seven times that figure. Recently the *San Francisco Chronicle,* the *San Francisco Examiner,* and the *Oakland Tribune* have begun to revive their interest in Berkeley—they crossed it off their list as soon as the riots stopped—but their center of gravity is elsewhere.

Gazette readers obtain a somewhat more regular picture of what the City Council, the city manager and the Board of Education are up to than do readers of the *Daily Californian.* Neither circulates very much in the other's backyard. The system by which information is distributed contributes to the estrangement of the citizens from each other.

The riddle of how to be an island and yet avoid being imprisoned in an island mentality is a difficult one. Middle-class Berkeleyans have something in common with the populations of small towns and suburbs such as Petaluma, California; Hinsdale, Illinois; or Wicasset, Maine. Townspeople in these communities live on patches of territory which they consider irreplaceable. They are trying to protect themselves against threats which are not imaginary and which cannot be dealt with solely on a local basis. The shortage of land, the increase in costs of living, environmental pollution, the weakening of the municipal tax base, the rising price of governmental services and the disorganization and impoverishment of the public schools, are regional, state, and national problems as well.

The recognition that many fundamental problems of small cities and towns require coordinated action at all levels of government itself poses some dangers—if such recognition leads to a state of dependency on outside sources to solve local difficulties. In Berkeley such a dependency is growing at a rapid rate. While Berkeley's elected officials have developed an extraordinary skill at getting large federal subsidies, the city has paid a high price for such "free" money. Sometimes this money has committed the city to open-ended programs of doubtful value long after the federal funding has run out. This "free money" has also meant, admits one school administrator, that federal agencies and the California state legislature now dictate educational policies, some of them "disas-

trous," simply by saying, in effect, "do it our way or you don't get the money."

Berkeley's success in getting outside funding has postponed the time when painful actions have to be taken either to expand the city's source of local revenues or to cut back its budget to fit what a recent planning commission study has shown to be a stagnating tax base. If city officials choose either of these alternatives they will have to face down a coalition of counter-culture people and radical political activists which has opposed efforts to attract new business and industry at the same time it has pushed for tax-supported social, educational and health services. Confronting such a coalition in the past has proven to be an uncomfortable experience. During the late 1960s, similar combinations frequently disrupted meetings of the City Council and other city agencies.

The fact that many city officials, including the Mayor, the City Council and the Board of Education appeared to be intimidated by such tactics and were not prepared to call on law enforcement authorities, has given many Berkeleyans the impression their government is not in control of the situation. This impression has been strengthened by disclosures of inefficiency in the administration of the public schools, and of federally funded programs. In 1975, for instance, a special citizens' task force investigation revealed the existence of a huge and wholly unexpected deficit resulting from poor accounting practices and over-spending.[2] Every independent analysis of such federally-funded programs as Berkeley's $6 million experimental schools project and the city's Model Cities and Economic Opportunity programs has concluded they were ineptly administered. And a West Berkeley Industrial Park, financed jointly through local and federal funds, has not been completed after more than 15 years.

It is very hard for the Berkeley citizen to pinpoint the responsibility for public policies and their implementation. Because of nonpartisan municipal elections and the ease with which myriads of people can nominate themselves for office, voters must choose from lists of dozens of candidates who, if elected, are responsible to no clearly identifiable constituency. The party organization of the heavily Democratic majority has become debilitated. There is no Republican Party to speak of, and the radical-progressive coalition that has split from the Democrats had until four years ago tended to shrink into a small, not very visible steering committee between elections. Only the radical-progressives have anything resembling a sizeable caucus to recruit and endorse candidates and platforms; and these conventions are assemblages, for the most part, of

[2]Illustrating the confused state of affairs in the administration of the public school system, the exact amount of the deficit was never made clear. Estimates at the time ranged from slightly under $1 million to $3.9 million, depending on who was making the audit.

white, middle-class people whose interests center around the campus community.

The lack of clearly identifiable political organizations that have strong bases in all regions of the city has made city government especially vulnerable to the pressures of small but highly organized pressure groups. Adding to the political confusion is the addiction of many of these political activists to intense ideological confrontations over generalized issues which have had more to do with U.S. foreign and domestic policy than local affairs.

The Berkeley predilection for fighting global wars is based upon the assumption by more doctrinaire factions of the left that local problems are a national scandal in miniature. In their view, the Berkeley police are, like those of New York City and Birmingham, Alabama, brutal and racist; the mild-mannered director of the local redevelopment agency becomes Robert Moses writ small; and local government departments are cells of the national power structure. The respect of citizens for their government is not enhanced by a tendency of elected officials and appointed board members to treat city department heads and employees with condescension, and to undermine their authority by intervening in the day-to-day operations of their departments.

Under the circumstances, it is not surprising that the Berkeley political community has become contentious and embittered in the last decade. The hate-filled rhetoric of a few years ago, when parts of the city were being trashed by violent demonstrations, has subsided, but the common use of abusive language has not. The word "racist" is hurled as indiscriminately as "Communist" was in the Joseph McCarthy era, and with the same paralyzing effect. Although there is much talk about "citizen" and "grass roots" participation at Berkeley City Council meetings, an exploration of Berkeley neighborhoods reveals that people are not in effective communication with each other. In this sense, Berkeley is less a community than an archipelago.

Not all Berkeleyans, of course, would agree with this description, particularly those who like to think of their city as a small town despite its size. Those who do see Berkeley as a cluster of semi-isolated communities think that the city's politics have become esoteric, disconnected from everyday concerns, and that a transient population of university students has had an undue influence in electing officials and shaping policies whose implementation they do not have to pay for and whose consequences they do not have to bear.

There are those who think the cause of the Berkeley malaise was the war in Vietnam, which struck particularly hard at a population with a very large proportion of the very young and the very old, exaggerating the

natural differences in outlook between the generations and minimizing what they might have had in common.

While there is much disagreement about the cause of the violent confrontations that fragmented the community in the past decade and created animosities that still run like an underground river through the city's political and social life, the symptoms of this affliction are in plain view. They are not symptoms peculiar to Berkeley. Despite its reputation as a singular city, it was subject to the same pressures felt by many U.S. communities: the effects of an unpopular war, increasing international tensions, unemployment, inflation, a national housing shortage, and economic and environmental crises.

Somewhere along the line, because of these pressures, the citizens of Berkeley seem to have lost control of the situation. It began with the interruption of a dialogue, built up painstakingly for many generations, that in the past had been the city's way of resolving conflict and achieving the consensus on which the democratic process depends.

Looking Back. In a city where every year there is a turnover of thousands of students and where a considerable portion of the rest of the population is coming or going in any given year, Berkeley history in the minds of many people doesn't go back more than a decade or two. This may account, in part, for the widespread belief among young people that until the anti-war demonstrations of the sixties, Berkeley had been a rather staid and complacent community, and that it took the anti-establishment activists of the new generation to awaken its social conscience.

Joseph Bort, a liberal Republican who once served as a Berkeley City Councilman and is now a member of the Alameda County Board of Supervisors, said that the city was a decent and humane community long before the advent of the New Left. When Bort came to Berkeley in 1935, he found that while it was politically conservative, it was "also a community where people were law-abiding, circumspect, generally highly considerate of one another, courteous in approach. It had its faults. It was a hard community to raise money in for civic causes because of the abundance of professional people—it was the business community that was most generous. And there was still the tradition of not paying teachers enough. But Berkeley was a delightful, individualistic and diverse community."

Many of these qualities have been lost, Bort said. "There are many narrow-minded people now, with tunnel vision, with very little generosity in their hearts. Many people have become careless of their homes and their yards, and they are not so considerate of their neighbors." Bort says

the change began with the Free Speech Movement in 1964 "which made Berkeley a highly attractive place for people angry at society. Now the attitude is you are either wholly with me or you're no good. There is no genuine intellectual tolerance. Maybe this trend toward turbulence and intolerance has something to do with our going through a period when a considerable percentage of the community was between 14 and 24 years old. Kids are not easy to get along with at this age."

A similar view was expressed by Robert Terrell, a young black journalist who participated in freedom marches in the South and has written a book about his friend, civil rights leader Cleveland Sellers. As a graduate student in Berkeley during the early seventies before joining the faculty of the University of Missouri School of Journalism, Terrell came to the conclusion that the most significant thing he noticed about the city was "an absence of a collective vision of where it's going or where it came from." He placed much of the blame for this on "a gigantic collection of young people who have no grasp of reality because they talk only to each other."

It would probably come as a surprise to many Berkeleyans to learn that the first five mayors of Berkeley all supported municipalization of local utility companies, a recurrent platform plank of the radical movement of the seventies. And even before Berkeley was incorporated in 1878, its inhabitants had gotten into the habit of curdling into distinct political and social groups that battled over primitive versions of the same issues that agitate contemporary Berkeley. What seems to Berkeleyans to be a modern class war between the radicals and the establishment had its parallels in the city's earliest election campaigns, when the Workingmen's Party assailed the liberals in the hills for dreaming up utopian schemes at the expense of the lower classes.

Almost from the beginning there were the makings of a town-and-gown conflict. Two communities formed, one along the shoreline where the original settlement had been (Oceanview)—and one to the east centered around the university campus. The working people of Oceanview came to resent the fact that their community was being outstripped by an army of educators, students, businessmen, lawyers, ministers, and land developers. In their turn the Easterners were inclined to look down their noses at Oceanview. One of the early battles between the two communities took place when, appalled at the nest of saloons in Oceanview, the Easterners convinced the legislature to ban the sale of liquor within two miles of the campus. Infuriated Oceanview leaders, among them several tavernkeepers, managed to undo part of the damage by persuading the legislators to reduce the ban to one mile. (This limit was repealed in 1978.)

The university student population even in the 1870s was subject to a

constant stream of criticism, not only because it had been the indirect cause of Berkeley's first anti-liquor ordinance, but also because students were seen as the cause of the housing shortage and the major cause of rowdyism.

Over the next half century the people of Berkeley argued over many of the same issues that have preoccupied latter-day political activists. They debated about whether it was better to elect their Council members on an at-large basis, or whether they should be elected by precincts. They argued over the design, location and cost of municipal buildings and schools. The university administration was attacked for being insensitive to town opinion. Ecologists demonstrated against cutting down trees to widen sidewalks and roads. Where to put the garbage became a perennial mystery. Racial discrimination, directed at first against Orientals, became a burning issue. Modern Berkeley's controversy over whether to operate its own utilities had its beginning in the 1880s and for a brief period beginning in 1887 the town produced its own electric power.

With all its trials, Berkeley was to establish in the first three decades of the twentieth century a reputation for progressive and effective self-government that gained it national attention. By 1914 the city was well ahead of most other American communities in its grasp of the importance of planning, having created a Civic Arts Commission whose responsibilities included the safeguarding of residential properties from the influx of business and industry.

In 1923 Berkeley was one of the first cities to adopt the council-manager form of government in order to reduce the corrupting influence of machine politics on city government. At the same time Berkeley set an example for other California cities by adopting its first Master Plan as a guide to growth and economic development. It solved its drastic water problems by tapping into the Pardee Dam on the Mokolumne River, thereby giving the city vastly increased fire protection. It created a serviceable and inexpensive public transportation network and the beginnings of a superior public school system. For a time, at least, this new town answered to the question of where to put its solid waste by depositing it along the waterfront. The solution, although it might anger latter-day environmentalists, provided 175 acres of valuable shore property which Berkeleyans are glad to have today although they don't know quite what to do with it.

Not the least of the city's accomplishments was the manner in which the city, despite its internal divisions, grew together and evolved a system of politics which could compromise differences, make decisions and move ahead. As a consequence, in the first half century of its existence, the city of Berkeley laid the foundations of a progressive and effective govern-

ment, the durability of which was to be severely tested in the next 50 years.

Adlai's Democrats. The Great Depression of the 1930s and World War II altered the psychological mind-set and changed the character of Berkeley's population and its politics. The young people who had emerged from high school and college during the Great Depression of the thirties found that a war awaited them instead of the careers they had prepared for. Added to an economic collapse which had crippled their families emotionally and financially, World War II was another hammer blow at family life.

Many of the parents who had grown up during the Depression and World War II could never describe the experience adequately to their children. As a result, the Depression generation found itself isolated from the establishment of the twenties and thirties, by which it had been abused, and from the younger generation of the sixties who held their parents responsible for all the things that had gone wrong.

What made communication all the more difficult was the way in which the Depression generation's obsession with economic security, bred by what John Kenneth Galbraith called the "depression syndrome" was interpreted by the new generation as a sign of their parents' gross materialism. In the eyes of the younger generation, the Depression generation seemed to have survived without losing faith in the very political and governmental process that had so humiliated it.

These wide differences in experience and perspective between the generations of the thirties and the sixties were to exert a strong influence on the course of Berkeley's political life.

Another result of the Depression and World War II was that hundreds of thousands of people came to the Bay Area in search of jobs in wartime defense plants and a new start in life. A large percentage of these were blacks from the deep South; by 1950 Berkeley's black population had reached 15,000. Other minorities, mainly Asian and Mexican, also increased. The minority population would eventually transform the nature of Berkeley politics which had been dominated for decades by a white, conservative Republican majority—despite a so called "nonpartisan" California election system that prohibited candidates for city office from running under party labels.

While this conservative coalition was successful in promoting business expansion and real estate development, improving city services, and in creating a superior school system, it was very slow to recognize the grievances and potential political power of its now substantial black population. Black citizens were not being appointed or elected to office, and it

was not until the beginning of World War II that the Berkeley Board of Education appointed its first black teacher. At about the same time the city hired its first black postman and black fireman, and appointed a black woman to the City Planning Commission.

Along with the change in the racial composition of Berkeley's population there was a very marked increase in the number of young people. The University of California's post-war expansion to accommodate the flood of returning servicemen entitled to educational benefits under the GI Bill of Rights increased enrollment from 11,828 in 1945 to 25,752 in 1947. While this meant that a great deal more money would be pumped into the city's economy, it also placed a greater strain on city services and greatly intensified the housing shortage. The university's effort to provide additional housing by building a complex of dormitories eased the strain somewhat, but it complicated the situation by taking land off the tax rolls.

Although the city was changing, the reigning conservative coalition was still doing business as usual. Thirty years later, T. Jack Kent, Jr., a professor of environmental design at the University and a former city councilman, commenting on his experiences as a city planning commissioner in the late 1940s wrote:

> I was appalled at the council's lack of a long-range plan to protect the future of the community, the city's completely inadequate professional planning staff, the council's needlessly subservient attitude toward the aggressive bureaucracy of the burgeoning university, and the inability of the city's leaders to recognize the threat of the automobile to Berkeley's by then already uniquely civilized life style. The spirit of an earlier Berkeley progressive tradition was simply no longer alive.[3]

Kent maintained that Berkeley's "once proud tradition of good government, led by the city's outstanding citizens" came to an end because its nonpartisan elective system

> in combination with the council manager form of government, was unable to face the need for action on expressing social and environmental needs. Racial discrimination with its endless ramifications —underpaid city employees, old ugly and unsafe school buildings, parks and neighborhood playgrounds unevenly distributed and grossly inadequate; the degrading use of the waterfront for the city dump, and the appearance, for the first time, of yellowish menacing smog, to which Berkeley was making a sizeable contribution by the 24-hour publicly-conducted burning at the city dump . . . these were the kinds

[3]Harriet Nathan, Stanley Scott, ed., *Experiment and Change in Berkeley: Essays on City Politics, 1950-1975*. Institute of Governmental Studies, University of California, (Berkeley: 1978), pp. 78-79.

> of stubborn, expensive, disturbing problems Berkeley was confronted with as the 1950s began. Inability to acknowledge and deal with them realistically led to the end of the old political system and the birth of a new one.[4]

The unsolved problems listed by Kent created discontent that crossed party lines. Voter registrations were increasing. A black community restive about its exclusion from the decision-making process had found a leader in a black businessman named D. G. Gibson who was to prove a master at political organization and negotiation. All that was lacking was a catalyst to set things in motion.

The catalyst came in 1952: the first presidential campaign of Adlai Stevenson.

The Stevenson candidacy affected Berkeley in much the same way it did hundreds of other communities throughout the United States. His intellect, his goals, and his style had a special appeal to young, middle-class liberals who had never been involved in traditional Democratic ward politics. A large number of such people, many of them from the campus community, joined the Volunteers for Stevenson. They found the campaign experience so stimulating that, despite Stevenson's defeat, they decided to continue their political activity on a local level.

In 1953, the Volunteers for Stevenson set their sights on electing Democrats to the City Council. But the City Council campaign of 1953 bore little resemblance to a presidential campaign; a nonpartisan ballot meant that the election could not be reduced into a simple Democrats versus Republicans contest. As a consequence, the Volunteers scattered their energies and campaign funds among several candidates, while a well-financed "nonpartisan" slate was put together by the Republicans and endorsed by the Berkeley *Gazette*. Nevertheless a few of the candidates endorsed by the Stevenson Democrats came close to winning, and they had learned a lesson: in other elections they would have to have a disciplined organization that could unite on candidates.

The Democrats formed such an organization in 1955, in time for the next City Council election. Called the Democratic Caucus, it was to function effectively for the next decade as a political forum open to all citizens. In the caucus, delegates from a variety of neighborhoods and Democratic Clubs could draft a platform, endorse candidates and design campaign strategies. The Caucus was doubly important because it sought the active involvement of the black community in party affairs. Pre-Caucus agreements of white and black political leaders activated a black constituency that was heavily Democratic, and eventually led to the election of Berkeley's first black officials.

[4]Ibid., p. 79.

The strategy was for black candidates to take their white running mates in tow, introduce them to West Berkeley audiences, speak in their behalf and arrange affairs at which the white candidates could talk to black voters in small groups. When black candidates visited the white hill areas, the white candidates would reciprocate. For a while this strategy had embarrassing results. The white candidates would win and the black ones lose. But with each successive election the blacks did better and better until, in 1961, the Reverend Roy Nichols was elected to the Board of Education and a young lawyer, Wilmont Sweeney, became the first black to sit on the City Council. Sweeney's victory, along with those of his white running mates, gave the Democrats a majority on the Council they have never relinquished.

Once in control, the Democratic council members asked the Human Relations and Welfare Commission to conduct a study of racial discrimination in housing and to prepare a fair housing ordinance. The Council Democrats also asked the city to consider rezoning the flatland areas to protect homes from real estate speculators and to finance the city's first municipal swimming pool. Then they turned their attention to slowing down the expansion of the University of California, redesigning several main thoroughfares and parks, creating an adequate system of public transportation, and a reversal of a city policy favoring commercial development of the waterfront.

Although the Council Democrats had the votes to override the conservative minority, they took the position that if the programs and policies they were interested in were going to succeed, they would have to have the cooperation of the city's middle-of-the-road Republicans. Such cooperation, the Democrats felt, could only be gained if the conservative minority felt its views were being seriously considered. One means the Democrats used to promote such a dialogue was by appointments to boards and commissions. While in the past the Council majority had used their power to name all the members of these agencies, the Democrats approved the practice of letting each member of the Council minority name a member to each board. While this procedure gave the Republicans more influence, it worked to the advantage of the Democrats who believed that a community consensus was necessary if they were to push through their reforms.

After complaining for years about racial discrimination in city jobs, the Democrats were finally in a position to do something about it.

"When we Democrats were elected in 1961 on an affirmative action program we had only one black in the fire department," former councilman Sweeney [now Superior Court Judge] recalled. "It was a mess. We changed exam procedures, and in one year we brought in eight or nine blacks . . . .

"Only three non-whites had been appointed commissioners before 1961. We got a minority person on every board except the Library Trustees. They got extremely self-conscious about being the only one without minority representation. When they got a vacancy they came to us and asked us for a minority appointment."

In the process of recruiting, Sweeney recalled, the City Manager found that minorities had trouble with the written exams. The Council's solution was to authorize special programs training them in the art of exam-taking, using old tests as practice. The Council also eliminated the requirement that a department head hire from the three people who scored highest on the written exam, giving the department head the right to select the applicant on the eligible list he felt to be most capable. Sweeney said:

> I didn't think eligibility should have been tied solely to exam grade. We questioned whether the person with the highest grades on a written test would necessarily be the best fireman or policeman. We asked the FEPC for special permission to allow the city to indicate the racial background of people who took the tests, so that we could begin to get some knowledge of the extent to which cultural bias might be present in the exams. We eventually got the test grades to be changed to pass/fail. A person who got a 98 was not necessarily more talented than one who got a 79. We also reduced the age limit for employability from 21 to 19, so we could recruit young people whose records were still relatively clean, just getting out of high school. We had found in our background checks that young people in the lower socioeconomic group tended to get into difficulty with the law once they were out of school and unemployed. We created some subclassifications in the police department, such as aides, who could begin to train for jobs and take tests even while they were finishing the two years of college required for employment in the police department. The aide program helped white kids as well as blacks in the late sixties.

Another Democratic Council member, elected four years after Sweeney, who made it her special task to encourage employment opportunities for minorities, was Margaret Gordon. In 1956, as legislative chairman of the NAACP, she had become dissatisfied with the efforts of that organization in combating racial discrimination in jobs, so she helped organize a citizens committee to conduct a study of employment problems of minority groups in Berkeley. "The results were shocking," Gordon recalled.

> "There were some blacks employed in manufacturing establishments in West Berkeley, but one could walk the length and breadth of Shattuck Avenue and other major commercial streets and scarcely encounter a

single minority group employee . . . In the city government there were virtually no minority group employees outside the refuse collection department, and the very few minority group teachers in the schools were in South and West Berkeley elementary schools. We publicized the survey results as best we could, and Assemblyman Byron Rumford [Berkeley's first black state legislator] made good use of them in his battle for a state fair employment practices act, which achieved success in 1959."[5]

Ms. Gordon, in collaboration with a group of University of California faculty members, secured financing by the Ford Foundation of a survey of unemployment in the South and West areas of Berkeley. The survey, taken in 1967, of 5,000 households showed that 15 percent of blacks in the labor force in those areas were unemployed, with 28 percent of the blacks between the ages of 16–24 out of work—this at a time when the national unemployment rate was 3.7 percent.

Accordingly, Ms. Gordon proposed creation of a Council committee to consider ways of developing an effective employment program for Berkeley. The outgrowth of this committee was a Manpower Coordinator who played an important role in developing summer jobs for Berkeley youths and in designing plans for obtaining federal funds for public service employment.

The Democrats further expanded their support within the black community by their leadership in backing the Board of Education's plans to desegregate the public schools and in defeating an attempt to recall two board members who had led the fight for desegregation. Democrats running for city council in 1965 who had taken positions in favor of desegregation were elected with strong support from black precincts, in several of which the voting turnout was nearly 100 percent.

But just at the time when Democratic liberals seemed to have everything going their way, events were taking place elsewhere which would undermine their power.

The Radicals Secede. At the very moment the Democrats were winning the Council election of 1965, large numbers of militant, anti-war Democrats, many of them students, were organizing to contest the reelection of Congressman Jeffrey Cohelan, a liberal Democratic leader and former city councilman, with a trade union background, because he had supported the Kennedy-Johnson policy of military involvement in the Vietnam War.

The young Democratic doves, in concert with some defectors from the Democratic Caucus, picked Robert Scheer, a young writer who had writ-

[5]Ibid, p. 273.

ten a widely circulated exposé of Michigan State University's involvement in the training of South Vietnam's secret police. Scheer was a vigorous, appealing candidate, and his supporters threw themselves into the campaign with the same energy that had enabled New York Reform Democrats to defeat Tammany Hall in Manhattan precincts. What the doves lacked in experience, they made up for in determination; what they lacked in financial power they made up in people power, with hundreds of volunteers staffing campaign headquarters, knocking on doors and circulating Scheer literature.

The primary results shocked the Democratic liberals. Running against a popular incumbent, Scheer received 45 percent of the vote. It was a Pyrrhic victory for the Democratic organization and Cohelan, foreshadowing his defeat in 1970 by City Councilman Ron Dellums.

Encouraged by Scheer's strong showing, his supporters had just begun to fight. Like the Volunteers for Stevenson of 1952, many of whom they now considered political enemies, people who worked for Scheer resolved to challenge the Democratic Caucus in local elections. In 1967 they took a step which destroyed it by running two candidates for City Council. Although their candidates did not win, they drew so many votes away from Caucus-endorsed candidates that the two Republicans were elected.

Many Berkeley liberals who thought they shared the goals of the New Left never fully understood the reasons for the New Left's bitter animosity toward them. What was so different, they asked, about the liberal and the New Left's positions on civil rights? Many Berkeley liberals were bitter over Vietnam, but they were unable to explain themselves, so the New Left continued to regard most "corporate liberals" as apologists for the concentrations of economic power that they felt responsible for the war.

The New Left maintained that what was needed was not political reform or a rewriting of the Constitution, but a political revolution that would destroy the ability of these powerful economic interests to control the direction of United States foreign and domestic policy. The New Left took seriously George Wald's contention that Vietnam was a proving ground for the military-industrial complex. The 1968 Democratic National Convention, whose action in nominating Hubert Humphrey was interspersed with scenes of Chicago police allegedly beating up peace marchers, convinced the New Left that the liberals were deeply implicated.

Under the circumstances, the New Left was not prepared to do political business in the same old way—by compromise and persuasion. The last thing the New Left was seeking was political accommodation. Its strategy in making demands the liberals could not accept was based on the premise

that to reach any compromise was equivalent to "selling out"—being "co-opted."

The New Left's supercharged rhetoric was effective. The patience of the community had been exhausted by Vietnam. A conviction of the uselessness of nonviolence after Reverend King's assassination was spreading among young people. The university, already tarnished by its insistence on the Loyalty Oath of the fifties and its Defense Department contracts, became in radical eyes the mirror image of the Pentagon.

The series of events that made this characterization plausible started well before anger over the Vietnam War caused the destruction of the Democratic Caucus. The date was 1964, the year of the Free Speech Movement at the University of California.

2 The Days of Violence

"Like It Happened Yesterday." The event that laid the foundations for the disintegration of the dialogue between political activists of the New Left and the liberal leadership of the University and the city of Berkeley occurred on October 1, 1964.

On that day, after several months of growing tension between students and the university administration over regulations forbidding political proselytizing on university property, University of California plainclothes policemen arrested a student, Jack Weinberg, who was manning a table and distributing political matter near Sproul Hall, the main administrative building.

After the campus policemen put Weinberg in a patrol car in front of Sproul, several hundred students "captured" the car by surrounding it and staging a mass sit-in. At first the demonstration was orderly. Mario Savio and others who climbed on the top of the police car to speak even took off their shoes. But the affair took an ugly turn when, after the campus police tried to lock Sproul Hall, demonstrators staged a scuffle with the police during which a policeman charged he was bitten by Savio. At about this time the Berkeley Police Department was called in to assist the campus police. The car was imprisoned for 32 hours and released only after student leaders had reached an agreement with University officials which included a promise not to prosecute Weinberg. At 7:30 P.M., October 2, Savio got back on top of the police car, read and explained the agreement, and concluded by saying, "Let us agree by acclamation to accept this document. I ask you to rise quietly and with dignity and go home."

The affair appeared to have ended, but it had not. An even more massive confrontation between the police and the students took place on December 2 after the University had ordered the arrest of several leaders, including Savio, of the October 1st sit-in. With Joan Baez singing and exhorting the protestors to "muster up as much love as you possibly can, and as little violence and hatred, and as little angries as you can," between 1,500 and 2,000 students and their sympathizers occupied Sproul Hall. The University's response was to summon 635 law enforcement officers including campus and city police, California Highway Patrolmen and police from nearby communities. Before the sit-in had ended, police had arrested 773 of the demonstrators, all of whom submitted to arrest without resistance.

Despite the efforts of both the police and the protestors to avoid violence, the arrests created a fresh wave of animosity towards the police. Max Heirich, in his book about the free speech movement, wrote:

> Most of the people who were arrested early in the procedure report that they were handled carefully and fairly gently by the police. As the morning wore on, however, treatment apparently became rougher. Altogether it took twelve hours to clear the building. That weekend several students on the second floor told me that as the police got tired they began to be less careful how they carried people down the long marble staircase . . . there were many charges of "police brutality" by the students, many of whom had never been previously arrested or faced handling by the police . . . . When the students were released from jail, widespread tales of brutal treatment at police hands circulated on the campus. Lawyers representing them urged them to report all injuries. No charges were ever brought in court, however, in spite of many hours of poring over pictures of the arrest and obtaining sworn testimony from various students.[1]

Heirich concluded that "although the police were probably quite rough toward the end of the period of duty (and some officers may have been less than courteous to students as their backs grew weary and their tempers short) it is unlikely that 'brutality' in the normal *police* understanding of the term occurred often, if at all. To the students and their friends, however, such technicalities were unimportant. They were shocked at the treatment that 'moral witnesses' had received from those who considered them to be 'criminals.' Reaction across the campus was severe."

The reaction of the police to the capture of the police car and the Sproul Hall sit-in was also pronounced. Fred Reese, a slightly-built, hazel-eyed man who now teaches police science at Delta Community College in

[1]Max Heirich, *The Beginning, Berkeley 1964* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), pp. 205–6.

Stockton, was one of the policemen on campus the day the police car was immobilized. "I can remember it like it happened yesterday," he said.

> I volunteered to work overtime. We waited the whole day in the basement of Sproul Hall. Weinberg, the guy in the car, had to go to the bathroom in a bottle. There were only about 200 people there at the time. Finally we got orders to come out. We marched out. We were disciplined at that point. Nobody was emotional, we were prepared to do what was necessary. We could have moved the students off very easily. Chancellor Edward Strong was talking to the students. Then he told us to march back into the basement. The respect for the police went to pot at that moment. They laughed at us. So after another forty-five minutes we filed out and went home.

Reese was convinced that if the police had arrested the demonstrators, there would have been no violence. In fact the demonstrators gave many indications that they wanted to avoid violence. Students who opposed the taking of the police car also spoke from the top of the car. The speeches as recorded by reporters at the scene were not inflammatory and centered on discussions of the role of the University, the moral justification for surrounding the car, and the nature of the students' grievances against University restrictions of campus political activity.

"At times it was even kind of funny", Reese remarked. "I remember Savio attacking the police and the establishment. While he was talking, Craig Morton [later to become a quarterback for the Dallas Cowboys and the Denver Broncos] came down with a lot of football players and other jocks. When Morton started moving through the lines to break things up, Savio turned to us and said, 'Policemen, do your duty, protect us.' And we did."

"The point is we had to go through the business of mass arrests over and over again later," Reese said. And as the students' resentment against the police increased, the police grew bitter. Reese maintained that in the mass arrests of December 3, the police leaned over backward to observe the rights of arrested persons and avoid violence. "Three officers were assigned to each arrestee, two to pick him up when he went limp and one going along with a tape recorder. We got them out as quickly as possible. The operation took a long time, and when the Red Cross people showed up looking for people to treat, they found no casualties. Nevertheless there were charges of police brutality."

For the remaining months of the free speech controversy, the police were able to maintain a low profile while students, faculty and administration worked out their differences. But although the free speech movement, taking its cue from such leaders as Michael Rossman, Joan Baez and Mario Savio, had been what could be described as a classic example

of nonviolent protest, it aroused animosities and set in motion trends which set the stage for protests of a very different stripe four years later. When Berkeley police officers were ordered in 1968 to confront large masses of demonstrators, they found themselves pitted against a very different type of adversary, one primed for action.

By this time Savio and most of the others prominently involved in the free speech movement had disappeared. "It was a different kind of ball game," Fred Reese said, adding as an afterthought, "I always thought Savio was a nice guy."

A Different Kind of Game. If the rules of the game were to be altered after the 1964 sit-ins, the press could take some credit for the change. By not conveying adequately the nonviolent character of the free speech movement and efforts of both the demonstrators and the police to act with restraint, the news media gave the impression that Berkeley was on the verge of chaos.

The subsequent oratory of Governor Ronald Reagan, to the effect that the university was a four-year course in "sex, drugs and treason," also contributed to the impression that Berkeley was a place where anything goes. Such an image exerted a powerful attraction for thousands of young and not-so-young people who were rebelling against their own private notions of the establishment and wanted to be where they could experiment with drugs and different lifestyles without fear. Their convergence on Berkeley created a new population on the periphery of the university campus.

The idea that Berkeley was an "open city" also attracted another type of migrant, often affecting hippie dress and attitudes, but very different from the flower children, the teenage runaways and all the other newcomers searching for their ideal community. These migrants arrived in town to do business, at the expense of the student and the hippie community. According to William Beall, Berkeley's Chief of Police at the time, 1964 marked the beginning of a steady and sharp increase in crime and a remarkable increase in volume of the traffic in hard drugs. Beall said that the free speech movement itself had no direct responsibility for this, pointing out that the main victims of the crime wave were the university students and the counter-culture people living on the edges of the campus. An idea of the magnitude of the increase in crime is conveyed by the following statistics for the seven major crimes—murder, armed robbery, forcible rape, auto theft, burglary, felonious assault, and arson: in 1950 there were 2,200 such crimes committed, while in 1967 the total had risen to 9,000, although the population had increased only slightly in the interim.

In addition to having to cope with a crime rate that had more than

quadrupled in less than three decades, the police department discovered that many of the newcomers, law-abiding or not, brought with them a virulent dislike of any and all policemen. "The influx of people from the East, predominantly from New York, consisted of many people who had built up a cynicism about police and a hatred of authority," Beall said. "They transferred their hatred to us and the city government."

Veteran Berkeley police officers, proud of the department's reputation for integrity and efficiency, were unprepared for such attitudes and life-styles. As the counter-culture population expanded there were more and more angry confrontations between young people and police, including efforts to prevent police from making arrests.

What further complicated the task of the city and the University police forces, whose responsibilities overlapped, in dealing with this new dissidence was the intense resentment among students and the counter-culture population against the Vietnam War. Anti-war sentiment was the ingredient which transformed an unstable mixture into highly explosive material. Large numbers of Berkeleyans were angry and were not inclined to be choosy about their political allies in the anti-war movement. Otherwise, at least some of the leaders of the peace movement would have taken greater precautions to make sure control remained in the hands of people committed to nonviolence. By 1968 the proponents of nonviolence found they were no longer able to set the tone of the peace demonstrations, and found themselves forced, for political reasons, to remain silent about tactics which were converting their community into a battleground.

Although City Manager William Hanley was not looked upon with affection by the newcomers, it is unlikely that many of them would have taken exception to his description of the counter-culture community which was to provide the main impetus behind violence on the campus and in the city's streets. Hanley was to write that on the eve of Berkeley's first massive riot on June 28, 1968, "There are still the hippies or flower children, essentially gentle and apolitical, though both their number and influence on the life-style of the Avenue have declined noticeably in the past year. There are the devotees of the drug culture, and those who prey on them—the dope pushers, the hoodlums and shakedown artists and the pimps." Hanley described another element of the counter-culture population as:

> the current intellectual and artistic counterparts of the "Bohemians" of an earlier era, who find the area a creative and stimulating setting. At the opposite pole there are the Hell's Angels and the would-be Hell's Angels. Also heavily represented in the area are the myriads of free-association groups, variously referred to as "family units," or

"communes" or "affinity groups" who live together in units of from five to eighteen or twenty members and who are essentially hedonist or existentialist in viewpoint. In addition to the resident groups, are the tourists, the teeny-boppers and kindred souls from all over the Bay Area who are drawn to Telegraph Avenue to "dig the scene." Most of these fairly regular habitues regard themselves as observers rather than participants, and often serve to increase any given crowd.

Among the groupings considered to be potentially more dangerous than the others, according to Hanley, were the

numerous factions of revolutionary or anarchist characters. These include a few old-line Bolsheviks and "pure" Marxists, but are most typically Trotskyites, Maoists, Guevarists, Fidelistas or plain old anarchists. Here again there is the division between the violent and the nonviolent. But those who are violently disposed are very violent indeed, with access to sophisticated expertise in plastic and other explosives, firebombs and Molotov cocktails. These various revolutionary and anarchist groups are constantly trying to "set up the board" so that they can play "Man the Barricades" with the university's support of an inexhaustible supply of "pawns" from among the other groups in the South Campus area. In my judgment this is precisely what was done in the weeks preceding the events of June 28 through July 3, 1968.[2]

The Five-day War. The "events of June 28th to July 3rd" to which Hanley referred were a series of riots the like of which Berkeley had never before experienced. Most Berkeleyans were not aware that something unusual was in the wind until an intense, voluble non-student named Peter Camejo, representing himself as a spokesman for the Young Socialist Alliance (YSA), the youth arm of the Trotskyist Socialist Workers' Party, stood up at midnight in a June 25, 1968, City Council meeting and informed the council members that his organization and several other left-wing groups were going to hold a rally on Telegraph Avenue near the campus as a demonstration of sympathy with French students who had rioted against political repression. Furthermore, he declared, the demonstrators would refuse to ask the city for a rally permit as required by law: the rally was going to close down the Avenue whether the city liked it or not. Turning down the city's offer of an alternative site for the rally in a campus parking lot, Camejo warned the council that "if you try to break it [the rally], we will protect ourselves."

Having no permit request to consider, the Council adjourned, leaving

[2]William Hanley, *City Manager Report 68-40*, August 22, 1968, pp. 1–2.

up to the City Manager and the Chief of Police the responsibility for keeping the Avenue open, in accordance with a city ordinance which reads:

> If a permit is denied in accordance with the provision of such applicable ordinance, or no permit is applied for, the police department of the city of Berkeley shall enforce the applicable ordinances, using all necessary means in accomplishing such enforcement.

For some time the city officials had been aware that this was to be no ordinary rally. Four days earlier the underground press had relayed an invitation to all interested parties to plan a "militant demonstration which will be heard about in Paris." At a subsequent meeting, a YSA speaker had told his audience that the rally would "supposedly be a nonviolent, but, hopefully, if we plan it right, it will end in the street and we will have to close off the street." At the same meeting, Camejo stated that "There has been no action in Berkeley in a long time and we have to create something."

Such expressions, added to police intelligence of weapons and explosives being stored in the South Campus area, convinced Chief of Police William Beall that outside help was needed. On the night of the rally, in response to his call for mutual aid, he had a force of 276 law enforcement officers, including 124 Berkeley policemen, 110 Alameda County deputy sheriffs, the entire University of California Police Department and all available police reservists.

In advance of the rally the demonstrators boarded up the windows of their headquarters, set up two first aid stations, stationed small groups of demonstrators on rooftops overlooking the Avenue, and had in readiness demonstrators with motorbikes to keep traffic off the Avenue.[3]

The original core of the rally was a flatbed truck, equipped with a sound system, parked at a central corner of the Avenue. By the time the rally began, the truck was surrounded by more than 700 people, some of them wearing helmets and carrying plywood shields. An hour later, demonstrators on motorbikes were directing traffic elsewhere, several fights had broken out, and the crowd had rendered the street impassable. The police, using bullhorns, asked the crowd to disperse. These warnings, repeated several times, were ignored. At this point Camejo was seen hurriedly leaving the area. Shortly thereafter the police came under a barrage of rocks, bricks and chunks of concrete; street lights were turned

[3]This information and subsequent material about the riots was drawn from interviews by the author, press accounts, police department reports and memoranda, on-the-scene reporting on tape by Denny Smithson of station KPFA, Berkeley, and on statements by civilian witnesses.

off; hydrants were turned on; barricades were thrown up in the streets; and several small fires were set. The police responded by warning that chemicals would be used if the demonstrators didn't leave the area. When they answered with more bricks and bottles, the police used tear gas on a crowd for the first time in Berkeley history.

"It was a big decision to make," recalled Captain Charles Plummer, then a lieutenant and field commander.

> Up until then the department had never used gas except on an individual shooting at people from a house. It was an unheard-of thing to do on the West Coast. We used $12,000 worth in 20 minutes. The crowd had grown to 3,000–4,000 by then.
>
> The gas didn't solve the problem. It scattered them, but then they re-formed in small pockets, three or four to a group. They'd run around our flanks. We'd try to mobilize. You can imagine what a job that was with all the mutual aid officers from other places. We began driving around, trying to put out all these little human fires, and they were smashing out the windows and running and tipping over cars. We were really frustrated and tired. We'd gassed ourselves because the gas masks leaked, and it burned you around the neck. It was hot but you had to keep the windows of the cars closed to keep out the rocks. Before the end of the night just about every window in every police car had been shattered. We decided the only thing to do was get out with our long batons. Our tactic was to drive three cars in tandem with four men in each. The first car would draw the fire—bricks and bottles—and scoot by. Then the two following cars would empty and the officers would go after the throwers. We finished the job in about an hour, by midnight. We thought it was over.

The police had miscalculated. The following night, June 29, a crowd of 500 demonstrators again blocked Telegraph. Captain Plummer described what happened next:

> When I led 200 men down to Telegraph it was the most eerie sight I'd ever seen. I was scared. My men were scared. I thought we were going to die that night. We'd had bomb and sniper reports. We got a hail of rocks and half bricks from an empty parking lot and from the top of the Forum, the restaurant on the corner of Haste and Telegraph. We had ladders with hooks on them and we scaled the roofs and drove the dissidents off. We took an awful beating. Fireplugs open, water gushing in the streets, streetlights were out, fires burning all over.

The police discovered Molotov cocktails when they stopped and

searched cars. The persons possessing them got no sentence at all when they got to court. We were shooting gas out of a shotgun launcher. Jimmy Rutledge, my driver that night, fired a gas grenade into the crowd of 400 and it scattered them. No sooner had they cleared out than a half gallon jug of flaming gaoline came crashing down in the middle of the street and exploded—flames shot up 100 feet in the air.

Rutledge's gas grenade prevented a number of people from being incinerated, but two California Highway Patrolmen were not so fortunate. Toward midnight in the middle of an intersection they were firebombed. "I saw the attempt to murder the two policemen by throwing Molotov cocktails at their feet," a witness later reported to the police. "In a split second they were flaming human torches. It was the most dreadful thing I had ever seen. The crowd fled like the rats that they were." One of the officers' legs was so badly burned that he never fully recovered and had to retire.

At 2:30 A.M. order was restored and an hour later a curfew was proclaimed for the South Campus area from 7:00 P.M. to 8:00 A.M. Forty-six people, 17 of them police officers, had been injured; 8 fires had been reported, 20 false alarms had been turned in, 3 bomb threats had been made, there had been 4 cases of breaking and entering, several dozen windows smashed, and 17 arrests—8 of them juveniles.

Although the curfew helped, it did not stop the destruction. On Sunday, the next day, a crowd of 350 persons, some of them carrying clubs and other weapons, marched to City Center Park, where according to witnesses, groups of demonstrators urged individuals to arm themselves with bricks, brass knuckles and firearms as a preliminary to taking over the University campus. Some of these groups were circulating through the crowd encouraging them to commit acts of violence in other parts of the city to divert the attention of the people from the Telegraph Avenue area. Less than an hour after the rally started, the crowd broke up into small units which invaded the downtown shopping district, using bricks from tree wells to smash windows and cars on Shattuck Avenue.

For the rest of the day and night roving bands of demonstrators set fires, exploded small bombs, and telephoned bomb threats in addition to throwing bottles and bricks. But by Monday, July 1, when the city broadened the curfew to include the whole city, the violence died down despite a plea by Black Panther Benjamin Robinson to a rally of 10 radical groups on Sproul Plaza to "Quit this marching! Go pick up guns and kill all these pigs."

On July 29 the police department reported that the riots had cost the city, other public agencies operating with the city, and private businesses

a total of $219,000. The dollars and cents cost was surprisingly low considering the fact that the disorders had taken place over a five-day period and had involved thousands of people.

Quite another matter, however, was the damage to the city's sense of well-being. During the first four days of the riots, 58 people—37 civilian and 21 police officers—had been injured; 218 people had been arrested; and Berkeleyans were divided as they had never been before.

In such a situation, it was inevitable that the government of the city should experience a loss of self-confidence. Even as the last of the violence was disappearing, the Young Socialists' Alliance and its affiliated groups sought another confrontation, demanding at a City Council meeting on July 2 that the city close off Telegraph Avenue for still another rally, on July 4th. This time the demonstrators had the support of 22 ministers, who in a desire to avoid further trouble, petitioned the council to accede to the demonstrators' ultimatum. Although none of the ministers had cleared their position with their congregations, their plea had considerable influence. Over the objections of the two Republican members, five Democrats voted to close the street.

The reaction of the police to the Council vote was bitter. "After all we'd gone through to keep the street open in accordance with the council's wishes, they gave it to them in the end," was the way one policeman put it.

"Giving" the Avenue to the demonstrators, however, meant an end to the violence, at least for the time being. The July 4th rally went off without serious incident.

Aftershocks of the violence continued for days. The underground press made it plain that, for some, the rioting had been a catharsis, a liberating experience. On July 3rd, the Los Angeles *Express Times* ran a front page headline in red proclaiming "War Declared, Foe Strikes at Berkeley, Boston", supplementing it with a photograph of Berkeley policemen captioned, "Enemy Troops Deployed on Telegraph Avenue, Killers Put Up Fierce Resistance, Then Fall Back."

The *Express Times* story describing the battle reported that "people were saying 'riot' like they really liked the word. They were caressing it like 'rebel.' It was an identity of self out of self."

A few days later, in a leaflet entitled *New Left Notes,* one Arlene Eisen Bergman, described in the broadside as a "long-time Berkeley activist," reminisced about the June 29th riot:

> By the time they [the crowd] turned the corner nearly every window on the block was broken. People have fought hard in the streets. All the rules of previous demonstrations have been broken. The cops used gas

on a massive scale. We retaliated for the first time, by stoning windows. They deployed goon squads in unmarked cars. We set barricades on fire, and someone even had the balls to set a cop on fire.

The city's analysis of the riots, on August 22nd, was a 38-page memorandum from City Manager Hanley to the Mayor and the City Council, containing a great deal of information about the active participants and the bystanders who had been injured or arrested by the police. Of the 176 people arrested (115 of them for curfew violations), 95 were Berkeley residents. Of these, 32 had been residents for 6 months or refused to give a Berkeley address. Only 23 of the arrested adults were University students.

The figures also revealed that of the 36 civilians injured, 5 were black, ten were University students. The only serious civilian injuries reported were two skull fractures—one of which was incurred as the result of a fall. The other fracture, according to the victim (who refused to press charges against the police), was of unknown origin. Most of the remaining injuries, all minor, were inflicted by riot batons. The injured civilians, for the most part, denied that they were active participants in the demonstrations. The most common reason they gave for being on the scene was to "see what was happening," "to see the hippies," "observing," "to see if there was a street dance," "to walk around and see the action."

The City Manager's memorandum reported that out of 85 complaints against the police, 60 could not be investigated because the complainant declined to cooperate in an inquiry, was too vague about the nature of the alleged offense or chose to remain anonymous. Of the 25 complaints that were investigated, in 13 cases neither the complainant nor the investigator could identify the agency or the officer.

In addition to providing statistics, the City Manager had something to say about the origin of the rioting. "Let there be no misunderstanding about one central point," he wrote:

> This whole contrived affair had nothing to do with the constitutional guarantee of free speech and public assembly. No community anywhere provides more opportunities and facilities for freedom of speech and the right to peaceably assemble than does the city of Berkeley, and no city government more fully supports the exercise of those fundamental rights. Sproul Plaza and Civic Center are internationally known as the Hyde Parks of the San Francisco Bay Region. There are many other University, school district and city facilities that are easily accessible and regularly used with no limitation on the content of the meeting . . . We do not believe that it is an

essential element of free speech that it be exercised in the middle of Telegraph Avenue or the on ramp to the Bay Bridge.[4]

One piece of information in the City Manager's report, which may have explained why the number of serious injuries had not been greater, was contained in the following paragraph:

> One overshadowing conclusion regarding the level of force used by law enforcement personnel emerges from the welter of facts that make up the history of these five days: despite nightly confrontations with demonstrators numbering from 500 to 2,000; despite severe barrages of stones, rocks, cement, cast iron, and other missiles; despite a minimum of 38 incendiary fires; despite widespread and wanton property damage and cases of breaking and looting; despite two fire bombings of fellow officers; and despite the cumulative effect of 100 hours of exhausting effort under extreme provocation . . . not a single shot was fired by any law enforcement officer; in fact, to my knowledge, not a single gun was drawn from any holster; and only four serious injuries occurred, two to civilians and two to police.[5]

If Berkeleyans were overcome with admiration with the way their police force had handled the civil disorders, it was hard to discern from the public record. In a city populated by so many inquisitive, skeptical people, including large numbers of sociologists, political scientists, journalists, criminologists, environmentalists, psychologists, and anthropologists, it might be supposed that the riots—and those that followed later in the year—would be followed by penetrating insights into causes and effects. If such insights were achieved, they did not surface very often in the ensuing public discussion. The Hanley memorandum and press and police reports notwithstanding, the riots were commonly blamed by the *Daily Californian,* many civil rights activists, and prominent members of the academic community on a police force determined to provoke a bloody confrontation with the demonstrators.

The action of the Berkeley chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) in establishing a complaint center was instructive. While encouraging people who felt they had been mistreated by the police to press charges, the center displayed no interest in inquiring into the legitimacy of the demonstrators' seizure of the street, their advance preparations for violence in stockpiling ammunition, or their use of lethal weapons during the rioting. And while the ACLU expressed great concern over civilian injuries, it at no time displayed any interest in seeing

[4]Hanley: *City Manager Report 68-40,* pp. 15-16.
[5]Ibid, p. 10.

that criminals who had severely injured police officers were apprehended and prosecuted. The ACLU also did not see fit to commend the police for their restraint in not using firearms during the riots, even when their lives were being threatened.

Not only were the police bitterly criticized by many liberals and the New Left for overreaction, they were also attacked by some merchants for not responding quickly or aggressively enough to protect private property against the rioters. The planners of the demonstration had not only won the street but the propaganda war as well.

The attacks on the police by a small but influential and vocal sector of the university community had significant political consequences. They were taken as a sign of approval of what Eric Sevareid has called the tactics of "stylized violence," with the result that such tactics became a habit. During the next several months impromptu crowds routinely trashed commercial establishments as a way of expressing their dissatisfaction with the policies of the national administration, while police, perhaps inhibited by public criticism, offered what some businessmen felt was entirely inadequate resistance. In August, for instance, when a crowd aroused by an anti-establishment rally, set fires and began breaking windows, the police held off, hoping they would quiet down. Only when the crowd shattered the plate glass in the Bank of America did the police move in. Even then when the police tried to play it cool, the results were disastrous. "They had thrown animal blood in balloons all over the bank," Captain Plummer recalled:

> I took several men in soft hats with batons in our rings with orders not to take them out unless specifically ordered. I approached Sergeant Haley who had a squad in front of the bank, and jokingly asked Haley, "Tom, how do you let such things happen, windows being broken." We talked for a few minutes, in a semi-circle. Then we heard five pops. Haley grabbed his groin. I said, "What's the matter with you?" He said "I've been shot, I've been shot." I said, "That's enough, let's get him to the hospital and gas this area and clear it completely and see if we can catch the sniper." Well we caught the fellow. We charged the guy. He stayed in jail for six or seven weeks, then finally got to trial and was found guilty. The judge gave him credit for time served and put him on probation. For shooting a policeman.

At least one rioter that night showed his own, peculiar sense of humor. In the disturbance one officer lost his glasses, which had his name and address inscribed on the frame. Not long afterwards, the officer's wife received a phone call. "This is Chief of Police Beall," the caller said. "I'm sorry to tell you that your husband has been killed."

Skirmishes. The summer of 1968 had set the tone and the style of what was to follow. The fall academic quarter at the University had barely started when another controversy began. After a faculty committee had approved a series of lectures by Black Panther Eldridge Cleaver, the University's Board of Regents had ordered the Cleaver invitation to be rescinded. In protest, 122 demonstrators participated in a sit-in at Sproul Hall and were arrested with several instances of vandalism reported. The following day a group of 75 persons, urged on by, among others, Peter Camejo, barricaded themselves in another campus building. After waiting through most of the night, the force of 565 police made up of the campus police force, the Berkeley police, Alameda County Deputy Sheriffs, and California Highway Patrolmen arrested the demonstrators. Two Highway Patrolmen were injured, one of them hit in the face by a steel bar which broke his jaw and several teeth.

Although none of the demonstrators had been injured, the campus reaction against the presence of the police was severe, and resulted in a tide of sympathy for the demonstrators.

The lesson was not lost upon the organizers of the next challenge to the University. In January 1969 an unstable alliance made up of white, black, Asian and Chicano students and their sympathizers from the counterculture community formed a Third World Liberation Front (TWLF) and declared a student strike with the aim of closing down the University until their demands for a separate ethnic studies program had been met. The outlines of the TWLF strategy, privately admitted by one strike leader, was to disrupt the University by acts of violence so that the administration would be forced to call in a massive police presence.

Such a police presence, it was reasoned, would provoke physical combat that would shock students and faculty members and attract intensive coverage by the news media. The tactics used by the TWLF were hit-and-run raids on classrooms that roughed up students and teachers, window smashing and other vandalizing of university property (including a rampage through the laboratories of the Life Sciences building which destroyed experiments in progress), beatings of campus security personnel, the illegal blocking of the University's main student thoroughfare at Sather Gate by "pickets" carrying clubs and boards, and physical assaults on individual students—including a 17-year-old girl who, not knowing what she was doing, attempted to pass through a picket line on the edge of the campus and was severely beaten. The violence had the desired effect. On February 5th, Chancellor Roger Heyns requested Governor Ronald Reagan to declare a state of extreme emergency, and Alameda County Sheriff Frank Madigan was placed in charge of all police forces on campus. The TWLF then adopted "Pigs off Campus" as its rallying cry.

The overwhelming police presence on campus did have a dampening effect on would-be trashers, but it played into the hands of the strikers. The violent confrontations between the police and strikers escalated, and, although it was usually impossible to tell who provoked whom, the results were plain to see. Joel Rubenszahl, a strike sympathizer, reported that the police violence was more severe than anything he had seen to date, personally observing "nearly one dozen severe beatings of strike leaders and supporters when they picketed Sproul Hall . . . . Hundreds of people witnessed these beatings but were powerless to interfere."[6]

While the tactics of the TWLF succeeded in getting publicity for its demands from the news media, they also caused the defection of many Asian students, and by March a substantial number, if not a majority, of black students were not willing to cut classes and were resentful of being harassed by white TWLF activists. This lack of support, added to the approach of final examinations for the winter quarter, caused the collapse of the strike. By the beginning of April no outside police remained on campus. Inexplicably, the Governor's proclamation of extreme emergency remained in force.

Although the TWLF did not accomplish its goal of closing down the University, it was a highly significant event. It revealed that a substantial minority of faculty members would renege on their contractual obligations to teach those students who wanted to attend classes despite the strike. The strike also showed that many faculty members remained silent about the violence of the strikers at the same time they condemned the use of force on the part of the police to protect the rights of students and university property. Another lesson of the TWLF strike was that in the face of clear proof that the university administration was unable to control the violence, the response of some articulate elements of the campus's liberal community was that the university should have been left alone to handle its own problems. To faculty members and students who were critical of the strikers' tactics, this attitude amounted to a declaration that the University was not subject to the same rules of behavior as the rest of the city.

The strike was illuminating in other ways, too. One measure of its impact on the students was a collection of more than a hundred essays written by undergraduates in one of my journalism classes. To know how they felt about the strike, I asked them to write down their personal feelings as noncombatants. What I got were scores of personal statements which betrayed an anguish and an eloquence for which I was totally

[6]I myself, however, on one occasion saw three strike sympathizers corner another adult male on campus and systematically beat him into unconsciousness. When I made an attempt to call the police, I was seized and threatened by several strike sympathizers.

unprepared. A paragraph taken from two essays by women students, gives some idea of what my class returned to me:

> Sadness and frustration. Where to turn? I live in a dual society. I live in a society where I hate the pigs and would surely not hesitate to call on a policeman for help . . . in a society where there is an enemy I hate, but no enemy because he is a man who is loved and whose pain would cause pain to others . . . I remain in a state of total frustration. I feel so helpless, so caught between forces. We live in a society labeled by David Riesman as "other-directed." Whatever "other-directed" means, it says to me there is a nebulous, all-powerful unidentified force controlling me. C. Wright Mills calls it the Power Elite; John Galbraith calls it the Military-Industrial complex; the TWLF calls it the white, racist power structure—I have no term, just the general image of the system. But whatever "it" is, "it" is here, there and everywhere. But since "it" is so undefined (at least to me), I am powerless to cope with it. In a total dictatorial state I would have a definite enemy. The enemy would not change; it would remain in view. It would be an easily recognizable force to challenge, confront and to change. But I do not live in such a society, so where do I begin to make social and personal changes in this way of life? A force hems me in, limits me, and impedes change, but I'm not on the line because I can't find the line.

And:

> One of the blacks in my French class suggested that we all write to Chancellor Heyns and express our support of the Third World demands to let the Chancellor see that the black studies program has broad support so he would implement the demands in order to avoid a strike . . . I wrote the letter and headed for the Chancellor's office. Since it was lunch hour I sat waiting for someone to return . . . While I was waiting I sat and thought . . . Will this letter do any good? Am I just going to mess myself up by giving them a name they can check out? I became more afraid and less moral. So I stuck the letter in my bag and walked home.

Peoples' Park. The knowledge that the University was an institution that could be intimidated was very much in the minds of the people who were designing the next confrontation with the University and the city.

Also on their minds were the turbulent demonstrations taking place on campuses all over the country. Recurring violence had broken out at San Francisco State, Stanford University and San Mateo Community College. In the East, Harvard students had gone on strike, Cornell University's administration had been occupied by rifle-carrying black students, the

south campus of City College of New York was the scene of pitched battles between crowds of students, campuses at Western Michigan, Temple, Queens College, the University of Illinois, and the University of Connecticut had been the scenes of violence and the National Guard had been called out at Southern University.

The danger in the air was abundantly clear to the Berkeley Police Department. Over the previous month it had conducted raids which turned up 2,000 sticks of dynamite, sophisticated time bombs and dozens of Molotov cocktails, shotguns and pistols. Police officers assigned to inspect the rooftops of buildings along Telegraph Avenue, a precaution taken after the summer of 1968 bombardments, were discovering sizeable caches of rocks, bottles, bricks, and pieces of iron which they would throw down in the street, to be carted away by city sanitation trucks.

An officer on one of these "rooftop details" reported: "I found all kinds of things. Iron rods used for reinforcing concrete. Two by four boards with nails on both sides. Clusters of long nails, really elaborate, twisted around each other, so that when they were dropped there would be three or four spikes sticking out no matter how they landed."

The only question was when and where the action would take place. The city and the University did not have to wait long. The issue and the terrain bore a remarkable resemblance to the situation at Columbia University. Students there had seized a building in protest against Columbia's plan to build a gymnasium in Morningside Park which they felt should be kept as open recreation space for Harlem residents. The University of California, Berkeley, also had its piece of open space and, like Columbia, it was planning to use this parcel of ground for student athletic activities.

During the summer of 1968 this area had been cleared of substandard housing, despite the protests of the counter-culture community, which accused the university of trying to get rid of the nonconformists inhabiting the structures. The open space covered approximately three-fourths of a city block on Telegraph Avenue. Ever since the area had been cleared, it had been little more than a neglected vacant lot and the scene of many nightly disturbances. But on April 18, 1969, the *Berkeley Barb*, an underground newspaper, ran the following announcement:

> A Park will be built this Sunday between Dwight and Haste.
>
> The land is owned by the University which tore down a lot of beautiful houses in order to build a swamp.
>
> The land is now used as a free parking space. In a year the University will build a cement-type expensive parking lot which will compete with the other lots for the allegiance of Berkeley's Buicks.

> On Sunday we will stop this shit. Bring shovels, hoses, chains, grass, paints, flowers, trees, bull dozers, top soil, colorful smiles, laughter, and lots of weed . . . .
>
> We want the park to be a cultural, political freak-out and rap center for the Western World . . . .
>
> This summer we will not be fucked over by the pigs "move on" fascism, we will police our own park and not allow its occupation by imperial power . . . .
>
> Robin Hood's Park Commissioner

Sunday's happenings were reported by Stewart Albert, one of those responsible for the anonymous announcement, in the *Barb:* "All sorts of straight and freaky people showed up at the Park. First the land was bulldozed, then we shovelled the rocks and shit into barrels . . . a truck rolled up with grass, that is, sod . . . flowers and vegetable gardens were planted around the trees . . . for the first time I enjoyed working. I think lots of people had that experience."

Jon Read, a landscape architect who supplied some of the construction equipment, wrote later that "the sod was magic—it was all good fun. The police showed up all smiles and thought it was great fun. The police were witnessing something they never thought possible—freaks doing work and liking it. The mood was so lighthearted, thanks somewhat to that old favorite Red Mountain Wine, that I got a full load of debris with the loader and held it over the police car."[7]

This was the beginning of People's Park. In view of the *Barb* announcement and the discovery of the rooftop ammunition, it is unlikely the police were as lighthearted or the happening in the park as happy and as nonpolitical as it seemed to Read. Years later Joel Rubenszahl, a prominent supporter of the People's Park movement, said that:

> the builders of the park were not a gang of ideological do-gooders intent on beautification of the south campus area. Although economic and environmental issues were raised by park developers and supporters, fundamental to the struggle was the right of ownership, and the nature of private property rights. The park builders challenged the authority of the Board of Regents [of the University of California]. Any movement aimed at a more equitable distribution of wealth and power must take a serious look at the "rights" of ownership . . . Radicals saw the

[7]This and other subsequent quotes attributed to Jon Read are contained in an unpublished paper completed in 1974.

People's Park movement as an opportunity to raise the issue of private property and create a forum for meaningful discussion.[8]

There is little evidence that such a message was communicated by "the builders of the park" to the hundreds of adults and children who saw the park as an experiment in beautification and togetherness. Each individual had his or her own reason for joining the crusade. To the "crazies" it offered a possibility of more street action; others saw the park as a catalyst for a non-hierarchical, unbureaucratic democratic politics. The movement appeared to grow casually in many directions.

Michael Delacour, who with his friend Wendy Schlesinger was to become one of the more visible People's Park figures, most decidedly did not share Rubenszahl's view that occupation of this park was a "revolutionary act." According to Read, Delacour's idea of the park "made sense on a number of levels. Not the least of which, according to Mike, was that it could serve as a common ground where radicals could cavort with the nearby sorority honeys." Delacour also had plans for the park which had more than a faint resemblance to those of the University's. "Mike wanted a ballfield in one corner," Read recalled, "but they never got around to making the bases."

Whatever their reasons, the park supporters convened by the hundreds, especially on weekends, to plant trees and debate world events. Quarrels about tactics—political, agricultural and excavational—ascended to frantic levels. The distribution of work for instance, was uneven. "Some people didn't want to water the sod," Read wrote, "They used to plunk it down and create a bog, or miss areas and not notice it until it had wilted . . . Coping with the hard reality was beyond the discipline of many people, especially [Art] Goldberg, who constantly made a botch of it." Some of the People's Park regulars were also concerned about what to do about the "crazies," the junkies, bums and freeloaders.

"Novel handshakes and saying 'groovy' and 'right on' is all very nice," Read commented, "but making a real change is hard work."

After several hundred people had been at work for several days, a worried University administration indicated it would be willing to meet with city officials and members of a Telegraph Avenue Concerns Committee (formed of business people and residents alarmed at what they saw in the offing) to discuss the situation.

But the Chancellor, despite his appointment of Sim Van Der Ryn, a Professor of Architecture and an out-and-out supporter of People's Park, to do the detective work, had little success in locating people authorized to speak on behalf of the Park supporters, who chose to convey their intentions through anonymous communications in the *Berkeley Barb*. On

[8]Scott Nathan, *Experiment and Change*, p. 324.

the same day, May 9, when an open hearing was held with Van Der Ryn presiding, to ascertain the community's wishes, the following *Barb* announcement indicated that the park supporters were not inclined to negotiate anything:

> We take a Solemn Oath to wage a war of retaliation against the university if it BEGINS to move against the Park. If the university attempts to seize 1.3 million dollars worth of land now claimed by the people, we will destroy 5 million dollars worth of university property.

By this time, several faculty members of the University's School of Environmental Design had volunteered their services to help design the People's Park, apparently under the impression that the park was to be an ecological project rather than the first salvo of a political revolution, the grand strategy of which might require destruction of university shrubbery, trees, and their own offices.

The *Barb's* threats upset the City Council and other city officials, who pressed Chancellor Heyns to settle the controversy. By this time, however, Heyns had concluded that there was no use in pursuing the subject any further, and on May 12th the University awarded a contract for putting up a steel fence around the park to the San Jose Construction Company. A day later, Heyns issued a statement which read, in part:

> We have been presented a park we hadn't even planned or asked for. But, strange as it may seem, no one seems to be happy about it. . . . So what happens next? First we will have to put up a fence to reestablish the conveniently forgotten fact that the field is indeed the University's, and to exclude unauthorized persons from the site. That's a hard way to make a point, but that's the way it has to be. The fence will also give us time to plan and consult. Regretfully this is the only way the entire site can be surveyed, soil tested and planned for development. We tried, as I said, to get this time some other way and failed, hence the fence.

The only effect Heyns' statement had on the Park supporters was to harden their resistance. Park supporters conducted a sleep-in and tore down 51 no-trespassing signs. At a noon-time rally in the park Paul Glusman, one of the instigators of the Moses Hall sit-in, commented, "Whatever happens, the Park will keep on growing. In the words of our great leader and teacher, Jerry Rubin, 'They can't co-opt us because we want everything.' "

So what was bound to take place took place.

Mayor Wallace Johnson recalled the scene. "At 5:30 A.M. May 15, on a cold grey morning, I witnessed a small contingent of University Berkeley police officers occupy People's Park. There were no occupants that morning except two or three small males, stoned, sitting in the yoga lotus

position, in the bottom of a hole in the ground, maybe four feet deep . . . Quietly they were lifted by the armpits out of the hole and, legs stiffly folded, placed in the paddy wagon . . . The whole operation was so unspectacular, including the start of fence placement by a contractor, that I left the scene convinced that no retaliation was planned before noon, when a rally had been announced for Sproul Plaza."[9]

After the arrests the police authorities, according to Lieutenant Ralph Schillinger, made

> quite frankly, a judgment error. We thought that there would be additional difficulty, but we thought it would be in the evening, so we cut back our forces to about 70 percent. We went home with the idea we'd be back around five. I had just gotten home when the phone rang. A huge rally had been held about noon at Sproul Plaza, and when the fired-up crowd heard the student body President, Dan Siegel, yell "Let's take the park" over the PA system, they turned and headed down Telegraph Avenue.

What happened next was related by Jon Read, the landscape architect who had donated equipment and materials to the People's Park supporters:

> I took off at full speed down the Avenue and arrived at the corner of Telegraph and Haste ahead of the crowd. There was a formation of twenty or so uneasy looking Berkeley police blocking that street. I had on a suit and tie for protection. It was somewhat like a dream . . . The crowd arrived and people waited for something to happen. Someone I knew from earlier demonstrations, not a pacifist, to my knowledge, walked out and stood out in front of the police facing the crowd. My better sense told me to join him and call for a silent vigil or something. It seemed like a pretty weak tea at the time, and I just stood there . . . A couple of people I never saw before turned on a fire hydrant. Then a few rocks came from in back of the crowd . . . The scene started to take on that sickening slow motion quality like an accident just before you hit.

When one individual, using a brief case, deflected the water from the fire hydrant onto the police, the violence began. As sheriff's deputies, wielding riot batons, rushed to turn off the fire-hydrant, they and the other officers at the scene came under a continuing heavy bombardment of bricks, bottles, concrete, and 14-foot lengths of steel reinforcing rods (discovered later to have been freshly cut with an acetylene torch and traceable to a construction site a mile away). Assisted by a tear gas unit,

[9]Ibid, p. 214.

the sheriff's officers retaliated by firing gas grenades. Within a few minutes the police, having exhausted their tear gas, were picking up rocks and hurling them back into the crowd.

"By the time we had gotten back to the street about 3:00, there were piles of rocks everywhere," Lieutenant Schillinger related.

> For a long while we held off a large crowd that was coming down Dwight to get on Telegraph. We were getting hit by iron rods they'd taken from construction sites. One rock came down from a rooftop that was a foot in diameter—somebody must have hauled it a long way just for us. We got two-gallon cans of tar thrown down from a three-story building. One knocked out our windshield. The tear gas was heavy. We were making a lot of arrests, but we had trouble holding the prisoners and holding off the crowd at the same time."

Officer Brian Oliver, who was at the same spot, picked up the story.

> When it broke loose we thought, "Oh shit, not again." I've never seen such hatred. We fought for our lives. We even thought of shooting people. Our car had all its windows broken, a big steel rod shoved into it. We had no tear gas left, no shotguns. We had six in our unit and we fought our way along Telegraph for one block, and just then the sheriffs came onto Telegraph where the California Highway Patrol was eating it. Then the Alameda County Sherrifs began firing. They shot people, and the starch went out of the crowd. It saved us, and helped us retake the intersection.

One police reservist was cornered by hundreds of screaming demonstrators who set his city car on fire, beat him to the ground, pelted him with bricks and rocks, knocked his head against the wall. When he drew his gun the crowd backed off long enough to allow employees of a Cadillac agency to drag him to safety. A California Highway Patrol officer's helmet, split almost in two with a brick, rolled 20 feet down the street. Another officer went down, stabbed in the chest with a thrown pocket knife. An unnamed police officer, quoted in the *Berkeley Gazette*, said, "We stood there like ducks in a shooting gallery and all we could do was to hop up and down and sideways to dodge the rocks and bricks and chunks of cement. The danger and the fear and the humiliation were so bad that for the first time in my life I really had the urge to kill . . . It was a matter of preservation . . . but I knew that if I drew my gun, my men would too."

The riot did not end until 4:30 in the morning of May 16, when 250 police cleared the park of about 75 people who were standing around a bonfire. At least 67 people had been injured, including six police officers. Fatally wounded, probably by buckshot from a sheriff's deputy's shot-

gun, was James Rector as he was standing on a rooftop watching the action. Another person had been blinded by a shotgun blast. About a third of the casualties were students, and 14 people were hospitalized.

Only one Berkeley policeman had fired a shotgun, wounding two demonstrators in the act of throwing missiles. No other Berkeley policeman fired a weapon of any sort, nor were they to do so during the next few days of sporadic rioting.

By nightfall, at the request of the Mayor, Governor Reagan ordered in the National Guard, and, in the Mayor's words "for the next two and a half weeks Berkeley and the University were under the self-imposed discipline of, in effect, military occupation."

Looking back at Bloody Thursday, Jon Read thought that the violence might have been avoided had the Park leaders been in control of the situation. But, as in past crises over the park, there were no leaders. Read commented:

> There were only a few minutes in which the mob could have been restrained . . . By restrained I mean to convince the group to tell the people in the back to stop throwing the rocks. In retrospect I regret deeply that I didn't try; and that the whole situation took me by surprise, that I wasn't prepared for the obvious eventualities. I had been telling others for years to think it out like a chess game and here I was standing on a corner not knowing what to do. . . .
>
> Without exception those I saw throwing rocks and trying to hit policemen were punk types I had never seen before. I saw some old radicals, including Mario Savio and Bob Avakian going through the motion of throwing things but their hearts were not in it. They were throwing from political conviction not hatred, and the police were not even in sight!

On the following day the Park supporters again went on the offensive, distributing a handbill that declared People's Park had precipitated a struggle over who would control the institutions and property of the United States. A crowd of 2,000 marched from the campus and surrounded City Hall, where they were met by 750 National Guardsmen. Over the weekend of the 18th, park supporters seized a 10-acre plot of land owned by the Bay Area Rapid Transit system and began construction of a second People's Park, several hundred people sealed off Herrick Hospital in a protest over the wounding of park supporters, and a crowd of 2,000 wound their way through the hill areas as a demonstration of support for the park takeover—a march which was carefully controlled and went off without incident. Guardsmen with fixed bayonets dispersed a crowd of 500 in the downtown area, but no weapons were fired.

Although massive, random violence lessened, tensions were not eased with the disclosure that police had arrested two armed men on the university campus. Then on May 20th feelings were further inflamed when a National Guard helicopter, ordered aloft when a crowd of 800 people were reported attacking police near the Chancellor's residence, sprayed the crowd with tear gas after it had returned to Sproul Plaza. This "bombing," which had been opposed by the University's Chief of Police, spread clouds of tear gas through many residential areas, penetrating into homes, schools and recreational areas up to a distance of at least one mile from the campus. After the episode, law enforcement authorities conceded that the tactic had been a disaster.

Violence did not end until the mass arrest of 482 demonstrators on May 22nd by a combined force of National Guardsmen and county and local law enforcement personnel.

Aftershocks. The stroke and counter-stroke of violence in Berkeley's civil disorders usually had a strange and impersonal quality. The people pressed up against the police lines were not the rock throwers, but when the bricks and pieces of metal came raining down, the police—when they lost control of themselves—attacked the taunters nearest at hand. Rarely during these struggles did people remember each other's faces. The criminals on both sides were able to take advantage of this fact.

True or false, the many stories of police brutality which were widely circulated throughout Berkeley had a decisive influence on public opinion. One of many examples of such accounts was Joel Rubenszahl's experience with some California Highway Patrolmen during a demonstration four days after Bloody Thursday:

> I had done nothing to justify being picked out . . . I in no way resisted arrest.
>
> I was knocked down with a blow to the head . . . Instinctively I raised my arm to ward off further blows. They each struck one or two hard blows . . . Luckily for me I was not alone . . . Others as soon as they realized what was happening began yelling and screaming, and I believed, saved me from a much more severe beating.
>
> I was yanked up and shoved across Allston Way. Against a parked car I was frisked and handcuffed . . . I was bleeding down the side of my face and was in somewhat of a stupor . . . I asked whether I was under arrest and what were the charges. "Resisting arrest" was the response . . .
>
> Just as we reached Grove Street and were about to cross, a Berkeley police van drove up and it was decided I was to ride in the van . . . We

> drove around for about 20 minutes stopping periodically to pick up other arrestees. I remember one stop in particular, a young broadshouldered black, having been arrested, was standing erect outside the door. I saw a Berkeley cop walk up and smash him on the head with a club. He hit the ground hard . . .
>
> The experience had a tremendous effect on my feeling toward the University, whose policies were at the root of the problem, the Berkeley City Council, whose inaction furthered the conflict, and the police, whose brutality heightened the tension in an already difficult situation.[10]

Such descriptions as these may partially explain why almost without exception, political activists in the campus, the counter-culture and the liberal and left communities agreed that the city and University administration and various law enforcement agencies involved were almost completely responsible for the carnage. One crowd of 300 people gathered at City Hall to hear a woman (who later became President of the Board of Education) call Mayor Johnson a political failure because, by calling the National Guard in, he had prolonged the riots.

In subsequent days, 200 graduate psychology students asked the University to "cease all administrative functions until the National Guard is called off campus and the state of emergency is lifted." Although defeating a motion to request the resignation of Chancellor Heyns, the University's Academic Senate passed a resolution demanding that the police stop using tear gas, all deadly weapons and other forms of excessive violence.

The Senate resolution also called upon the Department of Justice to "investigate police and military lawlessness committed in the name of the law and order." As for the demonstrators, it asked merely that they cease "all acts of belligerence and provocation." As a next step, the Senate suggested that the Chancellor meet with People's Park representatives with an eye to developing the site as an "experimental community-generated park."

Mayor Johnson's response to the suggestion that the disputed territory be turned over to the people was to point out that if another park was needed, the city had been laying out a park to suit everybody's taste just two blocks south of People's Park. His suggestion was ignored.

Community and campus groups which called for removal of the Guard and reduction of the police presence included the Law Faculty of the University, the Foreign Students Association, the Leftist Berkeley Coalition, and the Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarians. The Peace and Freedom Party of Alameda County, dominated by the Black Panthers, issued a call for a citizens army to be used for "self-defense against murderous

[10]Ibid, p. 331.

policemen and forces of the existing government which on Thursday showed itself to be completely the instrument of violence and murder in the interests of the wealthy capitalists by its gunning down the unarmed people of Berkeley and their guests." The staff and associates of the Center for Law and Society asked that the campus be closed until the police and the Guard were withdrawn and called for the "tearing down" of the fence.

At an eight-hour City Council meeting ten days after Bloody Thursday, Professor Thomas Parkinson, referring to the tear-gassing of the campus by the National Guard helicopter, declared that "the city of Berkeley is the first city in the continental United States to have been attacked from the air," and that irresponsible police authority "threatens the entire life of the United States." A spokeswoman for an ad hoc group called Citizens for Community Peace, said that if steps were not taken to "tear down the fence" and remove outside police forces, "we may have to take to the streets again."[11]

Not all of the voices raised were entirely on the side of the demonstrators. A group of graduate students issued a statement declaring that the university was being exploited by extremists. "Neither side cares to avoid the confrontation. Both sides are capitalizing on the destruction and suppression of freedom in this university." The Citizens for a Fair Settlement, asking for the fence to come down, pleaded with the park supporters to recognize that any planting be done with the clear understanding of its temporary nature pending final settlement. A memorial service at the Pacific Lutheran Technological Seminary stressed the point that everyone shared some guilt for contributing to the climate of hostility.

But by the time a group of Berkeley High students threatened to occupy school offices until the National Guard was removed, they needn't have bothered. Soon after Bloody Thursday, some Guard units had been quietly leaving town, and on May 25th, after being requested to do so by the City Council, Governor Reagan lifted the state of emergency, an event which somebody celebrated by bombing the Mayor's mailbox.

Ten Thousand Daisies. The city may have been partially demilitarized, but it was decidedly not at peace with itself. The level of anxiety was raised when the park supporters announced their next move: the staging of a massive parade of perhaps 50,000 people to People's Park on Memorial Day, May 30th. Many city officials were of the opinion that such a demonstration had all the ingredients of an explosion far more serious

[11]The spirit of the times was perhaps best illustrated by Thomas Hoving, then director of the Metropolitan Museum of Fine Arts. Testifying at a Berkeley hearing on May 30, 1969, on what to do with Peoples' Park, he favored leaving it an open space. A year later he angered New York conservationists by proposing that the Metropolitan Museum increase its size by one-third, achieved at the expense of Central Park.

than anything that had happened before. One prominent citizen printed and distributed a handbill counseling everybody to leave town for the day. Berkeley police began to hold emergency briefings and the remaining National Guard units were placed on alert. Local newspaper headlines such as "Shotgun Threat If Big March Gets Out of Hand," did not help matters.

As it turned out, however, the Memorial Day March set in motion a tide of reconciliation, guided by a few citizens who were determined to avoid another catastrophic battle in the streets. They were to transform the parade into something quite different than the original organizers may have had in mind when one spokesman, in announcing the parade, said, "the fence will come down and we will have the whole area for our park."

Two people who were to play a significant part in this change of mood were a middle-aged couple, Pat and Fred Cody, proprietors of a resplendent, two-story Telegraph Avenue bookstore, which to Bay Area booklovers was an eighth wonder of the world. The extent of Berkeleyans devotion to the place was shown during the Third World Liberation Force strike, when the bookstore was saturated with tear gas and had to be closed for several days. When it reopened, despite a sign warning the dreaded vapor still resided in the books, the browsers couldn't wait to get back in, wiping their eyes as they read, as if every page were printed on onions. Long before People's Park, the Codys had lobbied for a park in the area, and they had concerned themselves with the welfare of the street people, many of whom would camp on a broad rectangle of sidewalk outside the bookstore. When the Memorial Day march was looming on the horizon like a thundercloud, the Codys asked each other why the parade couldn't be an event that would restore people's trust in their city. Fred Cody turned to an old friend, Ray Kepler, for help. Kepler, a conscientious objector during World War II, responded by reeling off phone numbers of young people who were members of something called the Berkeley Peace Brigade. One of the first people called, Peter Begel, took charge and rounded up a group that congregated at the Cody's home, thereby starting a series of discussions which Cody said transformed his home into a "peaceful whirlwind."

"Our method of working was relatively simple," Cody wrote later.

> We had early come to the decision that most of what was to be done would have to be done by personal contact, not telephone. There were scores of people to be seen, many meetings to be attended, and our plans were altered again and again. Of one thing Peter was sure, and we were solidly behind him, that was that the people coming into Berkeley for the march were to be contacted as soon as they entered the city . . . For that purpose it was proposed to set cars at the main entry points off

the freeway and at other places in Berkeley. These welcoming stations, marked as prominently as possible, were to distribute material from the Peace Brigade to all who were arriving. In addition to a leaflet headed 'Power *IS* the People,' there was also a welcoming message to the city with a list of resources for lodging, information, etc., and a map of the city.[12]

In addition, Begel and the other organizers made plans for a Peace Workshop to be held on the evening before the march.

"The turnout at the beginning was discouraging," Cody recalled, "but by seven o'clock the first group was ready for the instructors. There was first an orientation as to the route of the parade, the place of assembly, the time it was to begin, and so on. A teach-in on tactics for responding creatively to violence or to incitements followed that." More than 700 people went through the training program that evening, Cody wrote. "Toward midnight, Ron Dellums, a City Council member (now a Congressman) dropped in and soon gathered a circle of people around him to talk. By 1:00 A.M. we were ready to close the school, and it was not necessary to carry on all-night instruction. Now the suspense leading up to the march began to be felt as the hour neared."[13]

On the day of the march, more than 20,000 people choked the campus area waiting for the parade to start, many of them carrying some of the 10,000 daisies purchased by the Berkeley Society of Friends. Then, despite an agreement between the planners of the parade and the police to follow a certain route, some paraders started off in another direction. They were confronted by a police detachment under Lieutenant Schillinger. "For fifteen minutes it was tense," Schillinger said.

> We were surrounded by 250 people who said we don't want to go the way everybody agreed. They were a dissident group, not the same people the police had been dealing with before. But we finally resolved the thing without violence, and they headed around and took the right route.
>
> When we got to the park, the people were solid from the fence clear across the street, packed in solid, marching. But sure as the sun rises, they stopped, and my heart sank. Inside the fence were 250 untried National Guardsmen, and they were nervous. The people were scraping the fence. It would only take one person to try to take the fence down and it would go down. I don't think the commander could have kept the Guardsmen from using gas—they would have had only one choice, to run or resist. Whatever the Guard would have done would have been

[12]Ibid, pp. 155-56.
[13]Ibid, p. 156.

> wrong. There weren't the riot-experienced types in this parade. These were mothers and babies, people from all over, who had no conception that tear gas wouldn't permanently hurt you. They might have run, in a panic, and 500 people might have been killed, trampled. It was the worst set of conditions I've ever seen. But then something happened. They dug up the streets, planted trees, rested, some women danced barebreasted. Mike Delacour came up to me and offered one of my patrolmen $1,000 a month for the rest of his life if he would join the dancers. The Peace Brigade did monumental things. They formed a line between the dissident groups and the police, trying to stay between the two potential combatants. They were students. Some of the others called them junior pigs, but they hung in there, exposing themselves to danger. God was with us that day.

The newspapers reported that the march was peaceful, and that there were only three arrests—that the only explosions were fire crackers and cherry bombs; that there was nude dancing and music by rock bands; that a group of monitors joined hands so that the marchers wouldn't cross police lines; that homeowners along the way allowed people to cool themselves off with their garden hoses; that everyone seemed to have flowers; that four policemen guarding a construction site were cheered because they had flowers in their helmets; that the marchers drowned the revolutionary chants with "America the Beautiful"; that many people carried canisters and picked up rubbish in the rear of the march; and that the demonstrators pelted the fence with flowers.

"We lost control of the march," Mike Delacour said some time ago. "The Quakers took it over. They spent several hundred dollars on flowers and passed them out. We came around and saw that awesome array of rifles and bazookas and bayonets. Then they put flowers in the rifles, and we knew it was over."

Another Proclamation. Two days after the Memorial Day march on the Park, some of the leaders of the People's Park crusade issued a 13-point manifesto asking the "Sisters and Brothers" to "fight for a Revolutionary Berkeley—with your Friends, your Dope, your Guns." The pamphlet proclaimed:

> We will make Telegraph Avenue and the South Campus a strategic free territory for the revolution . . . We will create our revolutionary culture everywhere . . . We will turn the schools into training grounds of liberation . . . students must destroy the senile dictatorship of adult teachers and bureaucrats. Grading, tests, tracking, demotions, retentions, and expulsions must be abolished.

> We will destroy the university unless it serves the people . . . Our battles will be conducted in the classrooms and in the streets . . . We will struggle for the full liberation of women as a necessary part of the liberation process. We will expand and protect our drug culture . . . we intend to establish a drug distribution center and a marijuana cooperative . . .
>
> We will break the power of the landlords and provide beautiful housing for everyone . . . through rent strikes, direct seizures of property and other resistance campaigns . . . we shall force them to transfer housing control to the community.
>
> We will defend ourselves against law and order . . . The people of Berkeley must arm themselves and learn the basic skills and tactics of self-defense and street fighting . . . We shall make Berkeley a sanctuary for rebels, outcasts and revolutionary fugitives.
>
> We will create a soulful Socialism in Berkeley . . . We will unite with other movements throughout the world to destroy this motherfucking, racist, capitalistic, imperialist system . . . We will create an International Liberation School in Berkeley as a training ground for Revolutionaries.

To what extent such exhortations influenced the psychological climate of Berkeley is, of course, hard to ascertain. In fact, according to one source close to the fountain of such pamphleteering, the authors were themselves half-joking. Then too, there seemed at the time to be a competition—Yippies Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin were in town—to see who could outdo the others in making the most outrageous statements of all. But such proclamations frightened many people and were believed to have a part in fomenting subsequent riots. From 1969 to 1972, for instance, there were many trashings of the city. Such events as the mining of Haiphong Harbor, the US invasion of Cambodia, the bombing of Hanoi, and President Nixon's reelection in 1972 all triggered violent mob tantrums. The justifications advanced by the perpetrators suggested a certain connection with the grievances outlined in the manifesto; outrage over the Vietnam War; resentment against the police, the university, the business community, landlords and school teachers; and a disregard for private property rights.

The manifesto was a caricature of many themes that were to appear in the subsequent literature of the Berkeley Left. Among these themes was the call for "limited expropriation" of privately-owned housing by the city on the behalf of tenants; "community control" of the city's economy; a sustained attack on law enforcement agencies; the demand to increase corporate taxes and lessen the tax burden of working people; and a cam-

paign to change traditional systems of testing and discipline in the public schools.[14]

Eventually the fence was removed from People's Park and the University cancelled its plans to convert the area into a playing field. Only once since then has the University ventured to make any serious noise about the disposition of the disputed piece of land, in 1976, when it held a public hearing on a cautiously-advanced proposal to build married students housing there. It quickly drew in its horns when some old Park supporters packed the meeting. But the people who planted the flowers and the people who issued the *Berkeley Barb*'s call for a "cultural, political, freak-out and rap center for the Western World" faded away.

In the summer of 1981 People's Park was a band of trees and garbage at one end, a broad open center section perpetually strewn with litter and bodies in various stages of disrepair, and an abandoned parking lot, made so when about a dozen people—angered by the University's decision to charge parking fees—attacked the lot with jackhammers while the police looked on impassively. At night the place becomes a miniature New York Central Park with all the trimmings—drug dealing, muggings, assaults, and an infrequent rape. Finally the police department took out an ad in the *Daily Californian* warning people to stay away.

Epilogue. At Columbia University during the student takeover of the administration building in the spring of 1969, several dozen faculty members and students had interposed themselves between the police and the protestors. Nothing like that ever happened in Berkeley. During all the times when crowds were forming on campus obviously preparing for assaults on University property, the police, and anybody else who stood in their way, faculty members, with few exceptions, were nowhere to be seen outside. Had they turned out in large numbers to remonstrate with all concerned to control themselves, they might have averted some of the violence, even if it had meant their absorbing some of the anger that otherwise would have been directed against the police.

A few faculty members demonstrated what could have been done. The action of a few teachers in stationing themselves in the basement of Sproul Hall where the police brought the arrestees meant that the prisoners were not going to be manhandled by sheriff's deputies and that false accusations of police brutality could be exposed as such. In various ways a few other faculty members, acting alone, showed what one person could

[14]All of these themes were expressed, for example, in a pamphlet issued under radical auspices, entitled *The Cities' Wealth: Programs for Community Economic Control in Berkeley, California,* and published by the National Conference on Alternative State and Local Public Policies, Nov., 1976. One of the writers, Eve Bach, was later appointed special assistant to the City Manager after the radicals elected a mayor in 1979.

do to turn a threatening situation into a peaceful, even productive one.

I remember one such professor the day after Bloody Thursday. It was about 8:00 A.M. and it looked as if there might be another riot in the making. A line of silent cops were standing along the curb on Bancroft Way, near the administration building and a crowd of about a hundred people were calling them racist pigs and mother-fuckers. The professor went over, placed himself between the cops and the crowd, and singled out a young woman in front who had been one of the noisiest. He asked her questions. Pretty soon he and the woman were going at it in lively fashion while everybody crowded around to listen. A young black man wearing a Black Panther button then took up the cudgels. The professor asked the Black Panther why he wasn't in West Oakland registering votes for the Peace and Freedom Party (Katharine Cleaver, the wife of the Black Panther Party leader was running on the ticket) instead of hanging around the campus hollering at cops. The Black Panther told the professor he was an old baldy who hadn't gotten into the twentieth century yet. Although the two were yelling at each other—they had to yell because the people on the outer fringes said they couldn't hear otherwise—things were getting more amiable.

After about 20 minutes the professor said his voice was giving out and he had to go somewhere. He and the Black Panther shook hands and then the whole scene melted away.

While all this had been going on, a bus had stopped to pick up the policemen and they had driven off. I'm sure nobody noticed.

3 The New Politics

Pragmatists and Ideologues. Berkeley is the only city in the United States which has had for more than a decade an avowedly radical political party which has continued to gain strength over the years to the point where it has not only a decisive influence over city government, but also has its own Congressman and State Representative and has constructed the beginnings of what is now regarded as a county-wide "machine."[1]

A review of events leading up to the Berkeley radicals' first successful bid for power would start, as previously mentioned, with Robert Scheer's campaign for Congress in 1966, when he almost defeated the incumbent Congressman in the Democratic primary. Then, beginning in 1968, the series of riots and anti-war demonstrations which unsettled and polarized the city gave the radicals added impetus and led to their first attempt to elect candidates to the City Council in 1969. Although they were unsuc-

[1]Before going further into Berkeley's convoluted political system—made further incomprehensible by its political nonmenclature—the following definitions of "liberal," "radical" and "conservative" (as used only in Berkeley) might be useful:

Liberals—liberals (corporate variety, applied by the left to all liberals); liberals (guilty variety—can be hyphenated—applied to all liberals); moderates (applied by liberals to the liberal center); moderate-conservatives (applied by the left to the liberal center); conservatives (applied by the left to right wing liberals); Communists (archaic).

Radicals—progressives (preferred by the radicals since 1975); pragmatists (the right wingers of the left); ideologues (the far left); crazies, anarchists and whackos (used by conservatives, liberals and a few radicals to describe such far-out radicals as vehicle dwellers and street people); Communists (applied to the left by the far right); liberals (right wing radicals are attempting to lift this designation from the "regular" liberals).

Conservatives—a Republican.

For obvious reasons, the author has for the most part in this text avoided these subtle variations, preferring to use the terms *liberal, radical* and *conservative* in the hope that the reader will be able to understand from the context which of these definitions applies.

cessful in this, the radicals gained experience and they were able to consolidate their support among students and antiwar activists.

They also received the solid backing of the counter-culture population from whose ranks many of the rioters came. This posed a delicate problem for the radicals and—as it turned out—for liberals as well.

From the very beginning of the 1968–78 decade there were some radicals as well as liberals who were deeply concerned about the disruption of the dialogue and what appeared to be an indulgent attitude towards the rioters. But as time wore on, it became clear that neither these radicals nor the liberals, for the most part, were going to risk their credentials by speaking out against what they assumed to be a popular uprising against authority in the name of peace and justice.

Those liberals and radicals who may have had qualms about the tactics of the demonstrators had different reasons for remaining subdued. For liberals to have spoken up would have been to expose themselves to accusations of being pro-war and pro-police. Radicals who may have felt uncomfortable about the trashings were not willing to renounce the political benefits of the violence: the unsettling of the city and the undermining of public confidence in governmental institutions. The radicals were also benefiting from the riots in another way. Attracted by the riots and a psychological climate bordering on hysteria, the mass media were transmitting the complaints of Berkeley to the world.

As the war gave signs of winding down and emotions subsided, however, the "hot" demonstrations which ended in violence began to seem more and more forced. Then, as the fringe elements in these demonstrations dropped away and left the hard-core instigators in a much more exposed position, it became clear that many of them, far from being idealists, would have been just as much at home in a squad of Hell's Angels.

While the radicals' self-described "revolutionary" thrust had appealed to people frustrated by their inability to have an impact on administration foreign policy, it tended to identify the radicals exclusively with issues that had little bearing on how to run a city. So, when the radicals decided to try to elect four City Council members and a mayor in 1971, they had to present themselves as a political entity that could deal with such mundane matters as the administration of city services, enforcement of zoning ordinances, and raising the money needed to pay for the multitude of new social programs it wanted.

The effort to turn more attention to such issues was resisted by a powerful segment of the extreme left. The people who had proclaimed during the battle for People's Park that they would make Berkeley "a sanctuary for rebels, outcasts and revolutionary fugitives" were more concerned with creating a "soulful socialism" by massive street action

than they were in electing people to office. This point of view was regarded by the public as radical gospel because the extreme left was far more adept than other radicals at generating public announcements couched in a type of apocalyptic prose which made good news stories.

Such radical writers of the early seventies as Joel Kotkin were ready with a list of Democratic politicians who were serving as a "front" for "corporate capitalism." To Kotkin, the University, with its large government grants for defense-related research was a "big factory, almost as bad as the Republic Steel Corporation." Kotkin characterized the success of the Democratic "moderates" in electing blacks to political office as a "brilliant victory by the black bourgeoisie." He dismissed the capture of control of the City Council by Democratic moderates in 1961 as merely a change from Republicanism to "corporate San Francisco-style leadership whose prime goal was the commercial development of Berkeley by the big real estate interests."

In the early days of the radical movement, a more elaborate exposition of the theory that many Democratic liberals are part of a San Francisco "corporate elite" was offered by Paul Grabowicz (now a reporter for the *Oakland Tribune*), on whom the radicals had relied for advice on tax and economic matters. Grabowicz charged that the "elite" was trying to "Manhattanize" Berkeley in much the same way it has San Francisco. A key instrument in its Manhattanization drive, he said, has been the multi-billion dollar Bay Area Rapid Transit System (BART) which has made feasible intensive commercial and residential development of Berkeley and communities to the east in Contra Costa County. Another part of the drive is "the whole push to regional government," which Grabowicz said threatens the power of local government to resist massive commercial development.

This theme was echoed by a public school teacher and wife of a Berkeley mathematics professor, Ying Lee Kelley, elected by the radicals to the city council in 1973:

> It sounds paranoid, I suppose, but there are indications that there is a lot of money interested in developing the Pacific Rim, noting that Hawaii is becoming the center for developing Oceana, including the Tahitian Islands. First the development and exploitation. The natives will have jobs, but this is no compensation for the disturbance of their lives and cultures. San Francisco on the western rim is seen as the New York of the West Coast, the western center of corporate life. It needs comfortable suburbs. As the center of radicalism, Berkeley doesn't fit into this. We've got to watch out unless we turn into a community of apartment houses.

We are for the right of the individual to live in a reasonable, life-giving community, not in high-rise apartments and suburbs. We don't want to be a feeder system into the corporate life of San Francisco. We want to be in a neighborhood where people can know each other. If we can no longer identify with our neighbors we're in trouble.

Evaluating a political movement by scrutinizing the words of its theorists, however, is dangerous business, if one is listening to Berkeley radicals. Many of the rank and file are not political in the conventional sense. They betray a boredom with elections, and if pressed to state an ideological position they will either change the subject or will express themselves in heavy rhetoric that resists clarification. A Berkeley radical might be someone, like Grabowicz, who had a very clear idea of how he would improve the administration and fiscal state of the city, or he might be someone who has joined the movement because he likes to smoke pot or hates policemen. Many radicals consider themselves not so much part of a political movement as part of a family whose members share certain social habits and spend a great deal of time shrieking at one another. In this respect Berkeley radicals are not unlike Democrats and farmers.

What may have appeared to Democrats and Republicans as a well-coordinated, thoroughly indoctrinated radical front, when viewed from the rear is an undisciplined army of highly individualistic human beings who grumble a lot about each other, and are congenitally suspicious of leadership, especially anyone who might be dubbed a "radical spokesperson" by the news media.

Under the circumstances it was not surprising that the radical left very early broke into two main segments, the "pragmatists" and the "ideologues" (terms invented by the radicals). The pragmatist wing was composed of leftists whose objective was to win elections with candidates who would push for progressive local programs and articulate the radical position on national and international issues. Most of the students and older liberals who had formerly identified themselves with the Democratic caucus fell into this group and some brought with them considerable practical campaign experience. They included two students, Jeff Gordon and David Mundstock, who were to play key roles in the radicals' successful campaign for the City Council in 1971, and Ilona Hancock, a bright, attractive, mild-mannered young woman who as a City Council member, would become the radical movement's most popular and durable office holder.

By contrast, the ideologues of the extreme left were not interested in what they called "electoral politics." They saw the city as a proving ground for drastic social and economic change brought about by harass-

ment of local officials at public meetings, rent strikes, and other types of organized resistance to local authority.

This division within the April Coalition, as the radical movement called itself, was to break out in public at its convention in April, 1971, called to endorse candidates for the City Council. One fact that emerged from the convention was its whiteness, its youth, and its almost exclusively middle-class nature. Very few blacks were in attendance, and they were not representative of Berkeley's black community.

The convention got off to an apparently harmonious start when both the ideologues, who controlled a majority of the people at the convention, and the pragmatists agreed to endorse Ms. Hancock, who had been defeated for the council in 1969. But the solidarity was shattered when the ideologues rejected a student candidate backed by the pragmatists and previously endorsed by a convention of 400 university students. The ideologues objected to the student in question because some of his principal backers had worked on the campaign staff of Ronald Dellums and other Democratic candidates. Dellums' credentials as spokesman for radical causes made no difference. As Jeff Gordon, a pragmatic leader explained, "To the ideologues, anybody who had worked with the Democratic Party was a tool of the capitalists."

In pushing a campaign for another student more to their own liking, the ideologues gave additional evidence of their distance from the pragmatists. As Dan Siegel, a leader of the ideological wing, put it, "We wanted to build a movement. Electoral politics was secondary. We wanted direct action, in the form of demonstrations, sit-ins, picketing. The war was ended by millions of people in the streets picketing and demonstrating. Little was accomplished by Dellums' election to congress."

In endorsing Hancock and the student favored by the ideologues, the convention had operated in democratic fashion. The leaders of the April Coalition were far from democratic in making the remaining two nominations. Some days prior to the convention a group of radical leaders had held a meeting with members of an organization calling itself the Black Caucus, an indistinct organization of doubtful antecedents purporting to represent black voters. The outcome of this meeting was that the Caucus was assigned two slots on the ticket.

The blank check was to have baleful consequences. The Black Caucus, a small group meeting in private to pick half the radical slate, was taken over by two newcomers to Berkeley whose main attraction was that they had seemingly unlimited sources of campaign funds. The more forceful of the two, D'Army Bailey, a Yale Law School graduate from Memphis, threatened that if he and his companion were not selected, they would run anyway and would destroy the credibility of the Black Caucus in the black

community. Whereupon, the Caucus meekly endorsed Bailey and his associate, pushing aside other candidates who were known and respected in the black community.

Ms. Hancock, in explaining her approval of the arrangement said that the important thing was to limit the number of candidates. It was a judgment, she said in retrospect, that the movement would regret later. What the radicals learned from the Bailey affair was unclear, however. Ms. Hancock seemed to treat it as a political miscalculation. But the Bailey affair was no mere miscalculation. It was an unmistakable indication that the radicals had very little idea of the political temper of the black community.

Nevertheless, the Black Caucus maneuver enabled the April Coalition to present a racially balanced slate of four candidates for the City Council running against a field of dozens of aspirants.

Certainly the election results seemed to indicate that the radicals had done the right thing. Three of the Coalition's four candidates—Hancock, Bailey and his associate Simmons—were elected. The Coalition's candidate for Mayor had also won. So the press reported that a revolutionary government had staged the peaceful takeover of an important American city.

The Revolution Postponed. The radicals were to learn after 1971 that in Berkeley politics, winning is more often than not tantamount to losing the next time. The so-called revolutionary takeover described by the press was an illusion that evaporated overnight. By the radicals' count the election had given them a 5–4 majority on the Council. Besides the three members they had elected, the radical leaders thought they could depend on Warren Widener, a black council member they had successfully supported for Mayor to support their candidate for the council vacancy created by his election. But Widener, after a brief dalliance with the radicals, threw in his lot with the Democratic liberals, voting with them to appoint their candidate to the vacancy. So instead of a 5–4 majority, the radicals found themselves with just 3 out of 9 Council votes.

The radicals' political misfortunes did not end there. They were still to pay the penalty for their endorsement of D'Army Bailey and Ira Simmons. From almost the moment he took his seat on the Council Bailey refused to abide by parliamentary procedures and regularly disrupted meetings by shouting obscenities and curses. Bailey did not reserve his epithets for the Democratic liberals. He routinely treated radical council member Hancock with contempt, on one occasion referring to her as "the spokesperson for the white ruling class," making clear what Hancock considered his low regard for women in public life. He was also critical of

the black Democratic council members, once calling Mayor Widener the "city's chief pig." Expanding his contempt he described Berkeley, whose citizens had prided themselves on being among the first to integrate their schools, as "worse than Mississippi."

Within a year Bailey had so antagonized voters of all political persuasions that a number of black leaders launched a campaign to recall him. Bailey attempted to readjust his personal style, but it was too late, and he was ousted from his Council seat in a 1973 special recall election by a large margin and was replaced by a black supported by the Council's Democratic majority. Thus the end result of the radical's first experience in trying to forge an alliance with a black community was to elect a Council member who discredited them and promoted the feeling among many voters that the April Coalition was not to be trusted to make sound political decisions.

Perhaps an even more expensive result of the radical's 1971 victory was that it taught the liberal Democrats of the rival Berkeley Democratic Club (BDC) a lesson: that only by uniting behind a single set of candidates could they ever expect to win.

Consequently the Democratic liberals' City Council campaign of 1973 was carefully planned. The Democrats had a shrewd energetic leader, Councilman Ed Kallgren, a practicing attorney. He took it upon himself to recruit candidates who might win on a slate endorsed by the liberal Democrats.

At a meeting in Kallgren's home—which the radicals cited as an example of back-room politics—a group of politically experienced people of "non-radical persuasion," in Kallgren's words, listened to eight candidates, then endorsed what became known as the Berkeley Four. The slate was a strong one. It included black incumbent councilman Sweeney, who in past elections had led all candidates; Henry Ramsey; Susan Hone, an incumbent council member; and Joseph Garrett, a student. The slate was greatly strengthened by the decision of a popular Republican council member, Tom McLaren, not to run for re-election to avoid drawing Republican votes away from the Berkeley Four.

Meanwhile, the radicals were experiencing another divisive nominating convention. As in 1971 it was split between the pragmatists and the ideologues. The politicking began more than a month before the convention, with each faction holding meetings that were infiltrated by informers from the other camp.

"We were always on the alert not to get screwed," recalled Jeff Gordon, still playing a prominent role in the pragmatic group. "It was a horrible way to spend Saturdays and Sundays."

The political infighting was further complicated by a new arrangement

for selecting a racially balanced ticket which was even more inept than the 1971 arrangement with the Black Caucus. To make sure that no racial or ethnic group would be offended, a 24-person committee on procedures was equally divided between blacks, Asians, Chicanos, and whites. Intended to restore harmony, this formula simply added racial animosities to political differences. The young left-wing blacks sided with the ideologues, while the Asians and Chicanos allied themselves with the pragmatists.

Because the ideologues had gotten out the most people at the 1971 convention, they had assumed they could do the same in 1973. But their addition was faulty. When the first vote was taken they found out that of the 1,100 people present, the pragmatists controlled 700. Consequently the convention nominated pragmatic candidates for the first three of the four spots on the ticket. The ideologues were only partially mollified when the pragmatists offered to support the ideologues' choice for the fourth endorsement.

Competing against a well-financed and unified Berkeley Democratic Club ticket which had solid Republican support, the radical slate went down to defeat, electing only one of its candidates.

Whereupon the Berkeley *Gazette* heaved an editorial sigh of relief, happy that the city had been spared a Socialist revolution.

The Liberals Counterattack. As the Democrats and radicals approached the 1975 municipal elections, it appeared that the radicals had learned more from their mistakes than the Democrats had learned from their successes. This time, liberal Democrats did not bestir themselves to recruit potential candidates.

On the other hand, the radicals took several steps to strengthen their campaign. First, they named themselves the "Progressives", in an attempt to broaden their appeal to Democrats of all persuasions. David Mundstock, a pragmatic strategist, explained that "we wanted to get away from the word 'radical' because of its terrorist implications."[2]

The Progressives set about the task of preventing a repetition of the divisive conventions of 1971 and 1973. The pragmatists, encouraged by Congressman Dellums, formed a new organization called the Berkeley Citizens' Action (BCA). The BCA invited scores of organizations to send representatives to a steering committee which would recruit and screen prospective nominees. With about 40 people participating, the candidates were interviewed and platform planks were considered. When the con-

[2]Many Berkeleyans, through force of habit, still refer to the left as radicals, so in order to simplify things as much as possible, the words "radical" and "progressive" will be interchangeable. Cf. n. 1, this chapter.

vention took place the steering committee was ready with its recommendations, which were approved with little controversy.

Democrats who wanted a clear alternative to the BCA slate were left pretty much in the dark as to the policies and intentions of candidates seeking their support. The crucial endorsements out of which a Berkeley Democratic Club (BDC) slate was supposed to materialize were made at two meetings. Attendance was under 50 people.

The members heard out a dozen candidates—including one whose main plank was creation of the post of City Jester. The meetings could have been easily packed if any of the candidates, some of them unknown by many in the audience, had signed up a dozen of their friends as members. The club members then voted their preference, restricting themselves to the candidates who had bothered to show up. The proceedings may have been democratic, but they were also an example of the party's lack of vitality.

On the face of it, the Progressives seemed to have a good chance of winning the 1975 Council elections. Although the liberal Democrats had raised more money from wealthy individuals and business organizations, the BCA had recruited and screened candidates much more efficiently and their convention had attracted many hundreds more participants than the BDC caucus.

The BCA candidates had three other very important advantages over the BDC candidates: a voter registration campaign that had gone on for months before election day, a large army of campaign volunteers, and the backing of Congressman Dellums.

While the BCA looked like a down-to-earth political organization, the BDC appeared to be what its name implied—a club, with very few troops in the field to register voters or to propagandize. The experience of Ruth Brunn, a Democratic club worker, was typical. When she answered a call to distribute campaign material, she found that the only other volunteers were a few relatives and friends of club-endorsed candidates—at a time when progressive campaign workers were saturating neighborhoods with their literature.

In view of these advantages, the BCA's showing in the 1975 Council elections was a deep disappointment. Candidates endorsed by the BDC captured three of the five Council seats, and the BDC's candidate, Mayor Widener, was re-elected.

Hard Feelings. In 1977, four years after the last United States troops had left Vietnam, the Progressives again convened to endorse candidates for the City Council. The advance preparations were about the same as in 1975; a BCA screening committee had drawn up its list of preferred candi-

dates and had printed a platform to be circulated at the convention. The look of the convention participants was also familiar. Of the nearly 600 people who turned out, most were in their twenties and thirties, white and middle-class. The 30 or 40 radical blacks attending were easily spotted because they sat together and caucused together, barring anybody who was not a Third World person from their deliberations.

The convention promptly got into a squabble between the ideologues and the pragmatists, with the ideologues insisting that the convention endorse a Communist as one of its four Council candidates. The resulting furor split the convention apart, and it finally ended by making only three endorsements, excluding the Communist.

The Berkeley Democratic Club, on the other hand, was bothered by no such ideological twistings and turnings. The club leadership had conducted a search for likely Council candidates, had interviewed everybody seeking their endorsement, and had prepared a list of its recommendations to the caucus. The meeting held to endorse candidates attracted over 100 members, less than a fourth of the turnout at the BCA convention, but twice the attendance at the Democratic Club's endorsement meeting in 1975. The participants included several black politicians and office holders. The BDC accepted leadership's recommendations and the BDC began its campaign with the endorsed candidates making it clear they intended to campaign as a slate.

Both the BDC and the BCA had their usual assets. The BDC candidates had the editorial support of the Berkeley *Gazette*, while the student-run *Daily Californian* backed the Progressives. The BCA could count on the support of Congressman Dellums' organization. As in the past, the BDC candidates were confident of raising more money than the BCA slate, which BCA hoped to offset by a far greater number of campaign volunteers.

But the liberals had one potent political weapon handed to them by their adversaries: an 88-page document prepared by a group of radical activists and published the year before. Entitled *The Cities' Wealth*, it was a provocative discussion of the ills of the cities and what to do about them. It was also an extremely impolitic treatise, which among other things stated that a prime purpose of the radical movement was "community ownership of housing and real estate." Such an objective was to be accomplished in the following manner:

> By enacting rent control legislation and thereby restricting increases in future rents a city may actually reduce the present value of a property. This is essentially community expropriation in favor of tenants . . . .
>
> Stringent rent control in Berkeley's speculative real estate market

> would greatly cut the value of rental property. Since other private owners would be unlikely to buy the property in such an unfavorable climate, the city could purchase the property at below market prices or aid tenants in converting the property to cooperative ownership.[3]

Until the liberal Council candidates made a campaign issue out of these and other statements in *The City's Wealth,* the general public was unaware of the document. But once its contents were broadcast, its impact on the voters was severe. The reaction of the Progressive candidates did not help matters. Despite the fact that *The City's Wealth* was considered the political bible of the Progressive movement, and the fact that one of her political aides had been a principal author, Progressive Council member Ying Lee Kelley denied having read the pamphlet and said she wouldn't comment on it.

Not only did all four of the Democratic Club candidates win, but Progressive council member Kelley, considered unbeatable by her supporters, was defeated by a candidate who was a newcomer to politics. The election revealed that the Progressives had lost ground in almost every precinct in the city.

Post Mortems. The Progressives put the blame for their poor showing on a divided convention, poor campaign strategy, their support of an extremely unpopular rent control ballot proposition, and—in the words of Ms. Kelley—the large amounts of money spent by the opposition to propagate "lies" and "slander" about Progressive candidates.

Not discussed very much in these meetings was the progressives' failure to expand their small base of political support in West and South Berkeley despite nearly a decade of representing themselves as the movement most attuned to the black community.

Not all Progressives entertained the notion that the movement was in touch with Berkeley's blacks. Well before 1977, Lee Halterman, an aide to Congressman Dellums, acknowledged the inadequacy of the Progressive's links with West and South Berkeley. He blamed the situation partly on the philosophical position of the left that white Progressives must deal with "symbolic black leaders" rather than with black voters directly. "The conception of how things should go is an hourglass, with the whites at one end, the blacks at the other, and the black leaders in the middle."

Halterman's own experiences as a campaigner for Dellums in Oakland may have convinced him the hourglass system was a faulty one. "Here I

[3]*The Cities' Wealth Program for Community Economic Control in Berkeley, California,* Community Ownership Organizing Project, National Conference on Alternative State and Local Public Policies, Nov., 1976, p. 21.

was, a white, promoting a registration drive in a 100 percent black area," he recalled. "I never encountered any hostility. I think blacks felt good that whites were there working in their community."

There were other radical leaders, however, whose attitudes seemed a little condescending. One Progressive council member, shortly after her election to the council in 1973, commenting on the Progressives' poor showing in the black community, told an interviewer that "unfortunately people with very low incomes are also people who are not politically well informed." This particular council member's remarks indicate more about her own political perceptions than they do about the facts of life in West Berkeley. Although a substantial proportion of Berkeley's black voters have achieved middle-income status, own property and have fairly conservative ideas about taxation and education, she tended when discussing Berkeley's blacks, to refer to them as "low-income people," as if "black" and "low income" were interchangeable. Also implicit in her comments was an unrealistic conception of what constitutes political sophistication among low-income blacks.

As Frank Riessman has pointed out, disadvantaged blacks are not particularly responsive to discussion of abstract principles carried on in high-flown language. The fact that low-income blacks prefer to talk about specific problems they experience in their own lives does not mean that they are politically naive or are unaware of where their own interests lie—a fact which Saul Alinsky demonstrated when he organized his massive black and white civic protests in the 1960s around specific, small-scale actions aimed at improving conditions at a local school, demolishing a dangerous building, or getting a better system of garbage collection.

Donald Hopkins, a black member of Dellums' staff, also thinks that many issues with which white radicals are preoccupied are too abstract to interest black voters. He does not have high hopes that white radicals can ever learn to communicate with black moderates. Even more of a problem, he says, is the communication gap between white and black leftists. Before they can get together, he says, "a lot of people are going to have to come off their ideological high horses."

One of Hopkins' learning experiences about the perils of getting white and black radicals together under the same roof was at a party he hosted for D'Army Bailey and Ira Simmons, the two black radical candidates for the City Council in 1971. "The reason for the party was to raise money for Bailey and Simmons, and to introduce them to many blacks in the city who would provide votes and support for them," wrote Hopkins. The white members of the coalition were also invited and showed up with a substantial number of their key supporters. Within an hour after all the key actors were present, it became apparent that the only rational purpose for such a gathering would be to prove that oil and water could not mix."

The next thing he knew, Hopkins recalled, was that he was "being told by various persons that a press conference would be held on Monday morning to 'blow this thing out of the water.' I cautioned as many people as I could to relax and do nothing until after the elections. Within minutes almost every white person had left the party, and the coalition lay literally crumbled on the living room floor."[4]

Hopkins said the disputes

> that took place between these particular blacks and white progressives were distinguished mainly by their insignificance and aberrant nature. Some arguments were outright sophomoric in my view: whether it would be presumptuous of a white candidate to sit next to a black Congressman while on tour aboard a cable car in the Black Community; whether the black candidates should "introduce" the white candidates to the Black community early on or later in the coalition campaign; whether whites should be burdened with the appropriate proportion of guilt for 400 years of Black oppression in America and how this should bear upon the credibility of the political opinions and judgments.[5]

Although before his appointment to a judgeship, black liberal council member Wilmont Sweeney was Dellums' most potent political adversary, Sweeney's analysis of radical white leftists is not unlike that of Hopkins. He often commented on what he thinks is their patronizing attitude towards the black community.

"You have to give the radicals credit," he said.

> They want to be in touch. But their perspectives do not resemble those of the black community, or communities, I should say. They have the answers, so they don't deem it necessary to ask black people what's right. They say to blacks, this is what is wrong with the police, with the Vietnam War, etc.—don't you agree? The radicals don't take the attitude that they don't know. I've never known them to inquire of the black communities, seriously, what these communities consider to be the right priorities, the right policies.

Despite Sweeney's characterization by the radicals as a "moderate" establishment black, during his years on the Council he consistently outpolled all other Council candidates in Berkeley's black precincts. His popularity was built on a long record of political activity in West Berkeley, and the law practice he shared with prominent black political leaders, including Lionel Wilson, elected in 1977 as the first black Mayor of Oakland.

[4]Scott Nathan, *Experiment and Change*, pp. 128–29.

[5]Ibid, p. 129.

"The radicals make a mistake," Sweeney said. "They fail to realize that politically a lot of black people in Berkeley are conservative. It's been tough for them to accumulate capital or property and they're not interested, like radicals, in doing things with one roll of the dice. Radicals are fooled by the fact that blacks are vociferous on the issue of civil rights—they're radical in that respect—are conservative on other issues. They won't jeopardize what they've earned."

Sweeney thought the radical movement's insistence on rent control, and its anti-landlord campaign antagonized important sectors of the black community—as has the radicals' support of costly social programs which many blacks see as primarily benefiting the Telegraph Avenue community.

Henry Ramsey, the former council member, said another example of the radicals' misunderstanding of black attitudes was their support of a ballot that would have split the police into three autonomous neighborhood units. This so-called "community control" proposal, which was originated by the Black Panthers, was overwhelmingly defeated and lost in the black sections of Berkeley by more than a three-to-one margin.

Ramsey described the community control proposals as the

> beginning of a wide division between blacks and the radical activist whites. The radicals saw a need to make the police serve the community more directly, to relate more directly to individuals. But they chose a stupid model. Segregation, to split up the police in different autonomous units—we in the black community have ours, you have yours, the hills have theirs. How do you expect to sell this to black people who've fought this very issue over and over?

"Now the principal political struggle is the undeclared war between the young white activists and the blacks," he said.

> Many of these white activists are what I call the voluntary poor. Unemployed by choice. They are people who aren't willing to make sacrifices, yet they are demanding more and more conveniences for themselves from city government. The whites are demanding money for services that ought to be used in black communities. They get it because they're more adept at proposal writing, public relations, lobbying. The blacks are not as well organized, not as well educated, and they don't have as much free time. They also do not have as much confidence in the political process.

The radicals' opposition to an industrial park in West Berkeley also antagonized many blacks in Ramsey's opinion, despite the radicals' claim that they wanted the area to be used for low-income housing for

minorities. The opponents of the park have come up with no way in which such low-income housing could be financed in the first place. In the second place, Ramsey observed, the effect of radical obstructionism in slowing completion of the park also postponed the creation of new jobs and a rise in tax income which could have been used for day care centers and other needed social services.

The fervor of radicals for low-cost, minority housing depends on how far it is going to be from their own neighborhood, Ramsey thought. "When I find a parcel of land in a middle-class residential neighborhood, the housing activists suddenly become environmentalists. They say, 'Hell no, that's open space. We don't want housing there, we want open space.' Well, parks are nice, but there's a limit . . . .

"When it comes to the black community, the radicals are out to lunch."

A Rush of Wisdom. While the Progressives' first reaction to their crushing 1977 defeat in the City Council elections was one of deep depression, in the long run the defeat was to mark a turning point in their fortunes. The pragmatists, now in control, made two important decisions. First, they decided that they would do everything they could to avoid issues that would frighten conservatives and moderate Democrats into going to the polls in great numbers. This meant cultivating the impression that a left-wing movement in Berkeley could be responsible as well as innovative. Second, the pragmatists decided to open up a year-round Berkeley Citizens' Action headquarters, under a full-time, paid director to broaden the BCA's political base and to build a campaign organization that would be practiced and ready for the 1979 City Council elections.

The BCA now resembles more and more an old-style political club. Its headquarters are open every day, and a lot of political work is going on inside. In keeping with an old tradition of political clubs, BCA headquarters is located in a dreary-looking, one-story building that used to be a store, and the office furniture looks to be third- or fourth-hand. The person originally in charge of the operation was a slight, balding, bearded man in his thirties named Mal Warwick. He could usually be found at a desk in the rear of the store. For a while he worked without pay but from the fall of 1977 until he resigned in 1979, he got a modest salary for a full-time job.

Warwick's emergence offered some clues as to the changes in the radical style. He is a mild-mannered man who was one of the pragmatists in the days when they were locked in combat with the ideologues for control of the radical movement. He is an experienced political organizer who says that a lot of the club activity should be social-fundraising—pancake breakfasts, and spaghetti feeds—where the political content is "somewhat limited."

As befits a club with 16 committees (on such things as housing, environmental quality, human services, education, jobs, and the economy), there are a lot of meetings. Warwick classified these get-togethers as of two types—one to discuss internal organizational matters, and "issues"; the other, "outer-directed," to organize public hearings and to cooperate in demonstrations with other organizations ranging from the Berkeley Federation of Teachers to the Revolutionary Student Brigade. While this cooperation is calculated to raise the BCA's stock with community groups, it sometimes presents political problems. BCA leaders are anxious to get rid of the notion that Berkeley radicals have a special thing for rowdyism and breaking up public meetings. For that reason some of them are dismayed at the tactics of CARE (Committee Against Racism in Education) which on several occasions has disrupted Board of Education meetings and printed up fliers accusing certain Board members of "crimes against children."

Perhaps the fact that the BCA is getting older is responsible for some of the mellowing that seems to be taking place. The average age of the members of the BCA steering committee, 50 percent of whom are minority people, is over 40. The BCA does not have as many active student volunteers as they did in the 1970s. But the ones who do participate, said Warwick, "are more active and operate more intelligently."

Warwick said that the BCA members were concentrating on strategies that would expand their political base and were paying less attention to the ideological issues that used to divide the radical movement, polarize the community and accomplish nothing politically. This turn towards a more conventional type of politics was helped along by the fact that many radical leaders of the era of confrontation politics had left the scene.

In this respect the Progressives are following the lead of Tom Hayden, one of the leaders of the anti-war demonstrations at the Chicago Democratic Convention of 1968. Hayden, who ran very well in a primary for the Democratic Senatorial nomination in 1976 against Senator John Tunney (although he irritated some radicals by campaigning in a business suit with vest), said a while ago that it was just as well to forget the slogans of the sixties because they didn't apply any longer.

The Progressives also are discovering that one of the secrets of Congressman Dellums' success is that he has a way of appealing to vastly different audiences. When he was a City Council member, for instance, he made a point of staying on good terms with even his most conservative colleagues.

The trend to a mellower type of political action is also attributable to the fact that old distinctions between radicals, progressives, liberals, moderates, and conservatives have become blurred on occasion to the point where they are no longer distinguishable, something which politi-

cians on both sides of the fence will admit privately. The BCA even found that its allies against Proposition 13 included such time-honored enemies as banks, large business corporations, and public utilities companies.

That the old labels don't seem to fit may mean that they can reach out for a new constituency that sympathized with the BCA on many local issues but was turned off by the revolutionary style of the sixties. A prime example of this breaking down of old distinctions was the changing alignment on the City Council, where in 1978 the two progressives on the Council received support from an unexpected source: William Rumford, a black politician whom they considered the most conservative member of the Council. Although Rumford underwent no change in his political philosophy—his defection on occasion to the progressives was the result of his rivalry with the Mayor, whom he wanted to succeed—the progressive Council members didn't allow that to stand in the way. They were glad to have his vote.

The test of whether the BCA had taken the right direction came in the city elections of 1979. In that campaign, the left put all its political assumptions on the line. Although the BCA nominating convention did not reveal any broadening of its base among older people and minorities (less than 10 percent of those present were blacks), the convention nominated for Mayor a black candidate who had not been identified with the ideologues and the violence of the sixties and early seventies.

The convention also endorsed three ballot measures which, unlike the anti-police initiatives of the seventies, did not antagonize a large cross-section of the voters. In fact, all three of the initiatives eventually received the endorsement of the rival Berkeley Democratic Club. It would not have been hard for the candidates nominated by the BDC and the BCA to run on each other's platforms. Except for the BCA's support of a stiff rent control measure, the substance of the two party platforms was remarkably similar.

The greatest difference in the two rival political camps was in how they ran their campaigns. The BCA, with its year-round headquarters and more than 200 trained volunteers, operated almost around the clock, putting out leaflets, registering voters and raising money. The BDC, on the other hand, had very few precinct workers, and was placing its reliance largely on a professional campaign manager and money to get it through the campaign.

The success of the BCA strategy—not to alarm the moderate and the conservative voters in the hills and to get out the vote in the areas around the campus—became apparent on election day. The results stunned everybody, including the BCA. It had elected a Mayor, had won three out of four City Council seats, and had elected two out of three Board of Education members and a City Auditor.

One-sided pluralities in the student areas showed that the BCA workers had done their jobs thoroughly there, while an extremely low turnout in the hills areas where the BDC was strongest, indicated that the so-called moderate vote was not very alarmed at the prospect of a progressive Mayor taking over.

On the day after his victory, Mayor Gus Newport sounded like anything but a radical. Clad in a business suit (he had sometimes campaigned in a dashiki), he announced that he would make no "rash" changes, that he would appoint a citizen's committee to study ways of attracting new business, and that he would work with moderates on the City Council and the Chamber of Commerce to get things moving.

"We're going to be responsible," he said. "People should remember that I'm a bureaucrat who analyzes the feasibility of new programs."

With these statements, the new Mayor seemed to be saying that he was trying to put an end to more than a decade of bitterness in Berkeley political life.

The Mayor's Foreign Policy. The Mayor's remarks indicated that he thought the time was ripe for some sort of dialogue. But a few months after he took office he went to Cuba to attend a conference of non-aligned nations which, predictably, attacked United States foreign policy. The impression that the radicals were still on a foreign policy binge was strengthened in June 1980. When the University of California athletic director announced that in view of the U.S. boycott of the Olympics, he had arranged an international track meet in Berkeley, the Council held an emergency meeting, at which one radical member said the meet was "an intensification of tensions between the U.S. and the Soviet Union" and that it would "spoil our leftist image." Shortly thereafter, the sponsoring organization announced it had cancelled the meet because of "the unfavorable political climate" in Berkeley. More than 22,000 ticket holders got their money back and Berkeley merchants were estimated to have lost 1 million dollars because of the cancellation.

The manner in which the new City Manager was selected all but finished the chances of dialogue. In an effort to recruit the one uncommitted member of the Council to obtain a Council majority, the radicals voted for her personal choice, a college administrator with no experience in city government.

In addition, the radicals committed at least one public relations gaffe of major proportions. The Mayor announced that he had invited an electric car company to locate in Berkeley, there was a parade, and the Mayor figuratively gave the producer the keys to the city. Later it was found that the manufacturer had a conviction for bank robbery, had declared bank-

ruptcy twice, and had passed some bad checks. The car itself, as discovered later, left something to be desired.

One great mistake the radicals made in retrospect was in their treatment of the landlord on the Rent Stabilization Board. Instead of regarding him as a source of information from the landlords' point of view, they spent months in an unsuccessful attempt to oust him from the Board, thereby providing plausibility for the landlord's claim that the radical majority was inveterately anti-landlord. Meanwhile the staff director of the board who was trying to force the landlord's compliance with the law, was caught red-handed by police spraying graffiti ("Amazonian Liberation," "Smash Pornography") on the wall of a store. Instead of being fired, she was retained on the job.

Big and little landlords were an important part of an organization sponsored by liberals and Republicans to get control of the City Council in 1981. An All Berkeley Coalition (ABC) was raising money, building an organization precinct by precinct and had enlisted prominent black leaders. For the first time the liberals did not write off the student vote: they founded a student organization and directed massive amounts of campaign literature to the campus—stressing that they were the ones who favored more student housing. And for the first time *The Daily Californian* gave unbiased coverage to a City Council campaign and ran long profiles and statements of all the leading candidates. In addition the ABC was able to match the BCA volunteer for volunteer.

The radicals knew they were in for a hard fight, but they made things worse for themselves by their campaign tactics. They continued to ignore the lessons of the 1979 campaign, where they had tried to broaden their constituency and calm the fears of the opposition. Two BCA campaign documents had just the opposite effect. One was a fund-raising letter from Congressman Dellums, directed to his and George McGovern's mailing list, which proclaimed that the Berkeley election was a contest between "Reaganism and the radical right" and the forces of progress. This had the twin effect of infuriating liberal Democrats (who had voted overwhelmingly for McGovern in 1972) and of galvanizing the Republicans.

The other document was a campaign flier that said

> We've all heard about the rise of new right-wing Republicans, the Ku Klux Klan activities in Richmond, the child murders in Atlanta. Some people are determined to turn back the clock on racial equality and social progress. Even here in Berkeley.

These two documents confirmed in many voters minds what they had already begun to suspect from the events of the last two years, that there was a marked lack of stability in the leadership of the radical movement.

The results, in any case—with the radicals needing only one seat to capture a majority on the City Council—was that the radicals lost all four contests, thereby giving the ABC a majority of one. It was the most bitter defeat for the radicals since they began as an organized political party.

Where do the radicals go from here? There is evidence that some of them are learning the lesson of 1979 all over again: that to win elections they must broaden their base beyond the students and the far left and bid goodbye to the politics of confrontation. Some influential radicals also say they need to develop leaders with a high and respected visibility, something that is impossible with the present policy of collective leadership where everything is decided by committee. These same radicals are prepared to risk the loss of the far left if it is necessary to expand their appeal into the territory of the moderate or middle.

Whether these views will last, or whether they are simply a momentary aberration, is hard to tell. But if the radicals are successful in an appeal to the center (which in any other community would be regarded as left-wing) they might kill two birds with one stone. They would not only increase their chances of winning but also, by the very act of broadening their constituency, they would be seen as less dangerous by the right. This in turn would soften the glue that has held the conservatives and the liberals together. Then, with the Republicans resuming their role as a third force in Berkeley's political life, the liberals would be more vulnerable.

One thing is certain; the radicals have been a force for change. They have gotten young people, especially students, interested in politics and government who might not otherwise have participated, and they have given them something important to do. It is doubtful that without the radicals pushing them, the liberals would ever have gotten around to recruiting young people. The radicals have also forced the liberals to become more representative. In 1975 the liberals' endorsement for City Council candidates was decided by less than 50 people—this in a city of 103,000 people the overwhelming majority of them Democrats. In 1981, however, the liberals joined forces with the Republicans in a new organization that within six months had a membership of over 1,500 people, over 400 of whom were volunteers on election day.

The radicals have presented Berkeley with a political alternative. They are durable and enthusiastic. They have proved, in resurrecting the old-style political club, that even politics can be fun. And they have demonstrated that an organization that depends on volunteers can still win elections, and that money isn't everything.

4 The Governors and the Governed

The Making of a Pseudo-Environment. Perhaps nobody is more responsible than the Berkeley City Council for laying the groundwork for the city's peculiar brand of pseudo-environment. The Council, under pressure from special-interest groups, does this by putting first things last and conducting its business in a highly erratic manner. In this respect it has some similarity with other municipal and state legislatures. But in other ways it is unique: there are not many municipal legislative bodies which have their own foreign policy, engage in debates over national defense measures, send messages to the heads of foreign governments, and refuse to pledge allegiance to the flag.

But then Berkeley council members, by and large, are not ordinary politicians. Politicians elsewhere may tend to be convivial offstage despite their political disagreements, but liberal and radical Berkeley council members take their doctrinal differences so seriously that cultivating social contacts with the opposition is considered fraternizing with the enemy.

The manner in which the Council handles its business is quite distinctive. Its disposal of what it calls the "consent calendar"—a large number of routine requests of the City Manager—is a case in point. Ordinarily these items can be passed with a single vote. But the Council members' distrust of each other and of the City Manager impels each member to inspect every item as if it were a time bomb. Any ticking, however faint, is a signal for a member to remove the item from the consent calendar, to be considered later as part of the "action" calendar, which is the main course of the council's menu. Generally the postponed items are never

reached, because the Council rarely finishes the action calendar, so the items are placed on the next meeting's agenda.

The upshot of this procedure is that the action calendar begins very quickly to resemble a great compost heap of neglected and decaying topics. A proposal by the city auditor asking the council to require landlords to pay interest on tenants' security deposits (which is the law in some states) was introduced in March 1976 and was still on the agenda half a year later. A proposal that the council pass an ordinance forbidding discrimination in rental housing against families with children received the same treatment. Even efforts to stop indefinite postponement of council business are postponed indefinitely. A suggestion by one radical council member to dispose of all old business before taking on new items appeared on every council agenda from January 1976 to August of that year.

When the disinclination to pass upon noncontroversial housekeeping matters is combined with the Council's propensity for turning ordinary arguments into a clash of ideologies, parliamentary gangrene sets in. In July 1976, Berkeley *Gazette* reporter Harvey Myman surveyed the scene and concluded that the Council was "drowning in a sea of paper work, tangled in a seaweed of its own political and procedural delays." To show how the situation had deteriorated, Myman reported that in 1970 a complete package of agenda documents from the City Manager would take up less than one-tenth of a file drawer: by 1974 such material filled one file drawer and then some. In 1970, Myman wrote, more than 240,000 copies of agenda material were printed but by 1974 the number had risen to 1,077,000 and council members were expected to read an average of 340 pages of material for every meeting. The situation has grown worse since then.

While the Council devoted only a small portion of its time to such matters as the Vietnam war, foreign policy, racism, militarism, and sexism, its ventures into these fields invariably created an uproar that would unsettle the community for days and leave the impression that the council's main function was to serve as a diagnostician of the ills of American society. The radicals were supported more than once by their liberal colleagues who, sensitive to charges they were apologists for the national administration, (one radical council member once called the Mayor the "Lyndon Johnson of Berkeley") hastened to put themselves up near the front of the anti-establishment procession.

The first of many rituals symbolizing the Council's determination to be different took place on the day in April, 1971, when the three newly-elected radical council members took their seats and refused to salute the flag and repeat the pledge of allegiance, an act which received front page attention in the newspapers. It was the last time the flag ceremony was

observed, the radicals having been joined by several liberal council members in deciding to ban the custom.

In November of the same year the Council expressed dissatisfaction with the armed forces by passing a resolution, with one dissent and one abstention, that offered shelter in a local church to any sailor who would desert from the U.S.S. *Coral Sea*, an aircraft carrier which was tied up at near-by Alameda Naval Air Station. The resolution stipulated that no city employees, including the police, would give assistance to federal law enforcement officers in their efforts to arrest the deserters.

The Council resolution became a cause celebre, bringing the Council into conflict with the City Manager, who said he was not going to ask police officers to evade their sworn duty to uphold the law, and with U.S. Attorney James Browning who declared that persons willfully concealing deserters are subject to prosecution for a federal crime, including members of the Berkeley City Council. The controversy was heated up still more when Congressman Dellums asked for an investigation of conditions aboard the *Coral Sea*, and an ad hoc Berkeley Peace Brigade predicted that at least ten sailors planned to seek sanctuary in the University's Lutheran Chapel.

The prediction proved inaccurate. The *Coral Sea* weighed anchor with all its crew members safely aboard.

The Council was to have better luck with another aircraft carrier a few months later. When a sailor from the U.S.S. *Midway* announced that he would seek sanctuary in Newman Hall, another Berkeley church, Mayor Widener introduced the sailor from the steps of City Hall and declared that he "as mayor of this city was personally giving the sailor my admiration and support." Another liberal council member then walked with the sailor to the church. Two days later the sailor quietly surrendered to the authorities and was bundled off to Hickam Field, Honolulu, as having gone AWOL.

Other matters that occupied the Council's attention during this period of absorption in international and national affairs included debates over whether it should condemn apartheid in South Africa, (it didn't); investigate and prohibit the expansion of "war-related" industries in Berkeley (it did); boycott products of the strikebound Shell Oil Company (it did); invite anti-war Vietnam veterans to encamp in a local park (it did); demand that the post-Allende government release all political prisoners (it did); and request cancellation of the B-1 bomber program (it didn't). The battle to reduce the visibility of the American flag also continued, and, at the request of one radical council member, the city manager decided not to fly the flag over City Hall any longer.

The most spectacular event in the Council's history as a critic of U.S.

foreign policy, however, took place on May 9, 1972, shortly after President Nixon ordered the mining of Haiphong Harbor in North Vietnam. The President's action caused severe oscillations on the Berkeley seismograph and the Council, which was to meet that night, knew it was in for trouble. By late afternoon a crowd of 2,000 had smashed windows, ripped up sidewalks and trashed several businesses in the downtown area on Shattuck Avenue, after which it headed to the Community Theater which the Council had provided for the overflow crowd. By the time the Council convened, there were 3,000 people in the auditorium, and they were at the boiling point.

The person who then turned up the thermostat was radical spokeswoman Ying Lee Kelley. It was the Council's duty, said Ms. Kelley, to approve a seven point "peace package," including a demand that the city establish an anti-war office in Berkeley and send $1,000 to aid in the restoration of North Vietnam's Bach Mai Hospital, damaged by U.S. bombs.

Nobody expected the Council majority to accept the "peace package." In fact, the success of the evening depended, from the radicals' point of view, on the Council's rejecting it. When the Council did turn it down by a split vote, the peace package exploded. A man, who under the name "Super Joel" Tornabene had built himself a reputation as an old hand at creating disturbances,[1] leaped on the stage, seized a microphone and shouted that the five liberal Council members who had voted against the "peace package" had incited a "riot" and should be placed under arrest. At which point the crowd poured onto the stage, buffeting some of the offending Council members. After trashing the Community Theater, the crowd swarmed out into the city where it looted stores and smashed the windows of the *Gazette,* the Elks Club, the Public Library and the main post office. The rampage continued until the crowd ran afoul of the Berkeley police and some Alameda County Sheriffs who proceeded to pepper the crowd with tear gas and putty bullets.

After counting up the fires, false alarms, and damage to property and persons, the police concluded that the night of the "peace package" had been turned into the most devastating riot since Peoples' Park. Mark Trautwein, a veteran observer of Berkeley's civil disorders, wrote in the Berkeley *Gazette* the riots had been "for fun—fickle and purposeless."

While local radicals were slow to realize that the peace package had generated an adverse public reaction, the most important figure in the

[1]One of Super Joel's more memorable performances occurred at a City Council hearing in October, 1972, when, clad in a floor-length blue cape and high-heeled, silver-spangled boots, he leaped on the stage and declared that the Council had no right to continue business as long as the Vietnam War continued. In the ensuing pandemonium, the meeting was recessed.

radical movement was having none of it. Within hours after the rioting, Congressman Dellums issued a statement expressing his outrage at the rioting and the vandalizing of the Community Theater. Two of the organizers of the Peoples' Park movement, Wendy Schlesinger and Michael Delacour, at a rally denouncing Berkeley city government as "illegitimate" and announcing the formation of a "Peoples' Revolutionary Government", urged their listeners to desist from trashing and confronting the police.

Nevertheless, some prominent radicals refused to concede that the peace package affair had been a serious political mistake. Council member Hancock blamed the riot on the Council majority's refusal to approve the "peace package," and she promised to bring the matter up again. And the day after the riot, radicals at a pro-peace package rally in Sproul Plaza booed and hissed the university student body president when he said he had been "sickened" by the violence. Then they took his microphone away.

How Not to Hire Minorities. If the Council's excursions into foreign affairs resulted in inattention to local realities, its ventures into the field of affirmative action were even more conducive to ignoring the facts of life. The radicals, with the liberals looking on resignedly, denied that that which had happened had happened—and they built a political issue on this fiction.

Anybody who assumed that because of the city's voluntary desegregation of its public schools and its success in recruiting minorities for city jobs established Berkeley as an enlightened city would have been guilty of grossly underestimating the ability of Berkeley radicals to turn an apparent consensus into a fundamental disagreement. A loud and protracted argument began as to who had the welfare of Berkeley's minority population most at heart.

The radicals charged that at best the liberals had been indifferent to the racism that permeated American society, or at worst were subconscious racists. To correct this situation the radicals proposed an affirmative action program that would give preference to minority job seekers until the percentage of such city employees equaled the percentage of minorities in the city's population.

That such a goal had already been achieved didn't matter. By 1971 under City Manager William Hanley's regime more than 35 percent of all city employees were minority people as compared to a minority population of 33 percent. It did little good for Hanley to point out that 31 percent of the city's department heads were black, or that 20 percent of middle management was black. The radical Council members simply repeated their statements that the city had racist hiring policies and repeated their

demands that the Council authorize an affirmative action program that would achieve the desired percentages.

All of this did not go down well with black council member Wilmont Sweeney, the leader of the liberal Democrats. "My position and that of most of the liberals was that we didn't want minority hiring put in terms of quotas," he was to say later. "Recruiting minority employees was to be a permanent effort, a buildup. We always said we wanted anybody hired by the city to be capable of doing the job, who could compete successfully with everyone else. It was our belief that blacks and Chicanos and Asians needed no favoritism to make the grade."

Sweeney recalled the situation before the phrase "affirmative action" came into vogue:

> We had formally adopted what in essence was an affirmative action program in 1967, long before the crazies [the radicals] came aboard. I worked closely with Hanley who was strongly committed to minority hiring from the day he took over as city manager. In fact, we didn't make progress on affirmative action until he came to Berkeley. We didn't set out trying to set down a written code. We simply decided it was our policy to recruit minorities. As a lawyer I knew that if we started putting a lot of energy into reducing things to writing we might very well be violating anti-discrimination laws. Recent court decisions striking down some of these affirmative action programs have proven we were right.

The radicals' prescription for a minority hiring program was that not only were minorities to be given preference over Caucasians in hiring, but job eligibility requirements were to be lowered drastically. In mid-1972, a Council affirmative action subcommittee recommended that the city not require a high school diploma (except for positions in the police department) and that felony convictions should not disqualify an applicant. These concessions did not satisfy radical Council members Bailey and Simmons. They demanded that the city make a special effort to recruit ex-convicts, former drug addicts and Black Panthers. The affirmative action subcommittee also proposed that the council deliver an ultimatum to the nonresident city employees: either move to Berkeley within six months or be fired.

Such a forced resettlement scheme would not only disrupt family life and uproot children from their schools, Hanley said, but would also, in view of the Berkeley housing shortage and its abnormally high rents, put these families in an impossible financial position. The recommendation failed only because the City Manager pointed out to the Council that the majority of the city's minority employees lived outside of the city.

Hanley opposed the affirmative action subcommittee's other proposals

as well. He said prospective city employees would be treated as "computerized elements of a selection process in which appointments are being made by classification according to race, sex and ethnic origins." He argued that the program would "transform the city of Berkeley from an organization to provide services, programs and projects of high quality into an organization that is simply viewed as a collection of employment opportunities."

The pit into which the Council members' affirmative action policies were leading them became deeper when, in September 1974, Hanley's successor, John Taylor, recommended that it reject the low bid for a landscaping contract by the Occidental Company because it was owned by two white men. Confronted with the prospect of paying almost twice as much for the next lowest bid by a minority owned firm, the Council hemmed and hawed. Then Taylor revealed that another minority-owned company which had not entered a bid could do the job for less than Occidental.

The Council was mercifully delivered from the dilemma when it was discovered that one of the two owners of Occidental was a light-complexioned Mexican-American. Whereupon the Council approved the low bid, saving a bundle of taxpayers' dollars as well as its own face.

But Taylor was not through. Some months later, he presented the council with detailed affirmative action guidelines for awarding city contracts and hiring minorities. This bizarre document began by saying that "discrimination because of race, color, sex, creed, religion, ancestry or national origin is inconsistent with the Constitution, laws and policies of the United States, the state of California and the City of Berkeley." Further along the document proceeded to list the racial, sexual and ethnic categories, members of which should be favored in the awarding of contracts and jobs. Eight categories, in order of preference were: (1) black women; (2) Spanish speaking, Spanish surname and American Indian women; (3) Asian women; (4) black males; (5) Spanish speaking, Spanish surname and American Indian males; (6) Asian males; (7) non-minority women; and (8) non-minority men.

In addition, he told the startled Council members that he would reduce the competitive bids of minority firms by 7 percent to give them an added advantage over non-minority firms. To illustrate how the system would work, Taylor provided a hypothetical case of four bids received for a city contract: (1) a low bid of $10,000 submitted by a white male; (2) a $10,300 bid by an Oriental male; (3) a $10,600 bid by a black female; and (4) a $10,900 bid by a white female. Applying his ethnic, racial and sexual handicapping chart, plus the 7 percent discount factor, Taylor would award the contract to the black female, with the Oriental male running a close second.

Befuddled by Taylor's example of how the bidding process would work and by the trellis of racial, sexual and ethnic categories he had erected, the Council received the proposal with a marked lack of enthusiasm. The Taylor plan also inspired a great deal of outside criticism, one of which was a declaration by Joanne Maid, a trial attorney for the Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, that said Taylor's eight categories from black women at the top to white males at the bottom would be "sticky," that it would be illegal "to pit minorities against each other," and that the city would be hard put to establish a rationale for favoring, for instance, a black female over an Oriental male.

A note of humor was injected into the controversy over the Taylor proposals for preferential hiring by Michael Culbert who was then the unabashedly conservative editor of the Berkeley *Gazette*. In a column entitled "Affirmative Action Follies," he reported discovering the following paragraph in a contract the city had signed with a private consulting firm:

> If the professional and support staff of Breck and Company exceeds five in number, Breck and Associates agree, as part of the Affirmative Action program of the Berkeley Redevelopment Agency, to recruit and seek to hire for the next vacancy on their professional or support staff a minority person without regard to race or sex.

Culbert wondered, "Could this conceivably mean a hermaphrodite individual so racially mixed as to be ethnically nondescript?" He then proceeded to answer his own question. "The name for that, in Berkeley, is a Republican."

The Council referred the Taylor plan to its committee on policies and procedures, and it did not surface again.

But Taylor's list of racial and sexual categories was already being used as a guideline in hiring city employees. In fact, the first legal challenge to the city's preferential hiring system was already being mounted. In January 1974, the same month Taylor presented his affirmative action proposals to the City Council, seven Caucasian Berkeley firefighters, armed with a "right to sue" letter from the State Fair Employment Practices Committee, brought suit against the city alleging that it had ignored a promotional eligibility list based on testing and had hired a black "solely on the basis of race." Then in August two more suits were filed by Berkeley firefighters challenging the constitutionality of the city's affirmative action program.

Acting Fire Chief Vic Porter acknowledged that of 80 applicants for 10 firefighters' jobs, only two dozen applicants—all of them minorities—had been interviewed. Asked why only minorities had been interviewed Chief Porter said that city policy was clear that such persons should be hired first. He also revealed that the department had three categories based on

examination scores—90–100, 80–90, and 70–80—and that any minority candidates in any of these groups were to be hired before the Caucasians could be considered.

When the hiring case came to trial in December 1974, in Alameda County Superior Court, the plaintiffs accused the departments of doing what the acting chief had already admitted it had done. Despite the fact that the plaintiffs in an open competitive exam had scored in the 90–100 category, they had been put at the bottom of the hiring list behind non-white and non-male candidates, all of whom had lower scores. The heart of the plaintiffs' brief stated that the Berkeley affirmative action program has "created at least seven classifications of prospective candidates or employees who are granted preferential treatment for employment and promotion which screens out white males solely on the basis of race and sex."

The city found itself equivocating, if not lying, about its policies. It was forced to deny the discriminatory practices because they were in clear violation of the city charter. At the same time the city did not contest the plaintiffs' charge that it had established a set of preferred categories, based on race and sex. It also admitted that, although the applicant's competitive examinations had been fair, not racially biased, test scores had been disregarded in favor of other considerations such as race and sex when hiring decisions were made.

When Judge Lyle Cook asked the city attorney to air his views the following exchange took place:

Cook: "Can you discriminate for anyone without automatically discriminating against someone else?"

City Attorney: "I would think so."

Subsequently the city attorney declared that "no white person may be discriminated against in Berkeley" and that the city hadn't been guilty of such discrimination.

The city's position became harder to define when, after Judge Cook declared that past discrimination against minorities is not a justification for present discrimination against non-minorities, the city attorney agreed, directly contradicting testimony introduced by the defense to the effect that present discrimination based on such grounds is warranted.

Judge Cook's verdict, in February 1975, can have scarcely been a surprise to the city, although City Manager Taylor issued a statement for public consumption that he was "surprised, disappointed, mad and astounded." Judge Cook held that the Berkeley affirmative action program was unconstitutional, violating the Berkeley city charter, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Constitution of the United States. Continuing, Judge Cook said that a program which required that all hiring and promotion aimed at eventually matching the sexual and racial composition of Ber-

keley, and which stipulates that persons in "underutilized" racial and sexual categories must be promoted without regard to test scores, is illegal. "A quota is thus established . . . and an almost iron-clad procedure has been designed to assure its accomplishment. The plan has been followed so faithfully . . . that the latest and most logical development during the current exam for employment in the fire department was limitation of oral exams to minority applicants only."

The city appealed the decision. Three years later the California Court of Appeals ruled unanimously, citing the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in Bakke vs. University of California (which invalidated the minority quota admissions program at the University of California, Davis, Medical School), declaring that Berkeley's affirmative action program was unconstitutional "on its face" and ordering the city to award in excess of $30,000 in attorneys' fees to the plaintiffs.

The irony of the invalidated race quota program was that if its guidelines had been strictly adhered to, fewer blacks would have been hired than the city actually employed between 1972 and 1978.

There were two significant things to be learned from all this. First, that racial quotas in certain situations where a community has already made a positive effort at recruiting minorities can do great harm to the very people they are intended to benefit. Second, that a city which prided itself on its respect for individual rights had to be taught a lesson on the meaning of the Fourteenth Amendment by its own firemen.

The Campaign Against The Police. Perhaps the radicals' greatest single contribution to the creation of a pseudo-environment built on myths and stereotypes was their continuing onslaught on the Berkeley Police Department as racist, brutal and undisciplined. This was in tune with what the radicals perceived as a growing national resentment against police agencies for their treatment of anti-war demonstrators, their harassment of civil rights marches in the South, and the disclosures of widespread spying by the FBI on the activities of private citizens.

One advantage Berkeley radicals had over critics of police practices in other larger cities is that they were facing a police department that was essentially non-political. Since the days of August Vollmer, the founder of the Berkeley Police Department, every police chief had considered that one of his main functions was to protect the police from political interference, and that to accomplish this, it was necessary to keep policemen out of politics. So, although the Berkeley police had their own Policemen's Association, it had been a social and low-key bargaining unit within the "police family." As such it did not have the kind of political power exercised by the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association of New York City or the San Francisco Police Officers' Association, both of which are

strong enough to make or break police chiefs, and whose spokesmen are not at all hesitant to excoriate governors and mayors and dictate policies to them.[2]

The radicals' first move against the police—a 1971 ballot initiative which would have dismantled the police department and replaced it with three autonomous units under the control of neighborhood councils—failed. Undismayed, the radical leadership wasted no time in trying to impose tight restrictions on how the department operated and in exposing what they felt were its illegal activities.

In their campaign against the police, the radicals had a psychological advantage over the liberals. The police battles with anti-war demonstrators were still on the minds of Berkeleyans, and occasional outbreaks of rioting in the early seventies refreshed these unpleasant memories. Liberals were not anxious to take the leadership in defending the police because such a course appeared to be a non-win proposition. Consequently, the radicals were able on several occasions to get at least some liberal council members to go along with policies strenuously resisted by the police.

The radicals' most important liberal ally in its early assaults on the police department was Mayor Warren Widener, whom radicals had helped elect in 1971. In November 1971 Mayor Widener charged the department with "glaring insensitivities" in its drive to cut down the heroin traffic on Telegraph Avenue.[3] The mayor claimed that the police had used drug busts as a pretext for harassing young people, and he did not retract his charges despite a report by the Police Department that in the first 10 months of 1971 the department had seized narcotics worth a total street value of more than $1 million, and that police had made 930 arrests for dangerous drug and related offenses.

Mayor Widener did not go along with the radicals, however, when they charged that the Berkeley police had become a threat to the citizens, rather than their protectors. This attitude surfaced early in 1972 when the police department announced it was undertaking "Operation Identification"—similar to that already in effect in many U.S. cities[4]—to encourage citizens to engrave personal articles with their driver's license

[2]In the 1981 Council election, for the first time in its history the Berkeley Police Association went on record with a political endorsement.

[3]The public got another side of the story from a Telegraph Avenue businessperson. The proprietor of Nicole of Berkeley, a women's apparel shop, said the Platoon Four of the police department had cleaned up the avenue, reducing gambling and narcotics traffic with the result that the "public is coming back to the Avenue." She added that the cleanup had been accomplished with no evidence of "police brutality."

[4]Operation Identification started in Monterey Park, California, in 1963. The 5,000 homes participating in the program experienced 20 burglaries while the 7,000 homes that did not participate had more than 2,000 burglaries.

number in order to discourage burglaries. Police officers had volunteered to contribute more than 800 hours of off-duty time to contact 45,000 households, offering them the use of engraving pens supplied by the Berkeley Exchange Club.

Operation ID had been underway only one week when radical Council members demanded that the program be cancelled because, in the words of one of them, it was a "Fascist intrusion" on the privacy of Berkeley citizens. Although the Chief of Police reported that all but two of the 272 families approached in South Berkeley, a black residential area hard hit by a surge of burglaries, had cooperated enthusiastically, the three radicals combined with two liberal Democrats to carry their motion. Henceforth, the resolution stipulated, policemen could go to homes only where residents had specifically requested Operation ID assistance.

The Council resolution meant the end of Operation Identification.

The Council delivered a telling blow at police department morale and efficiency when, in May 1972, it cut 23 positions from the force, leaving it at the same level it had been in 1968, although in the four subsequent years the department had had to handle an increase of 30,000 crimes. In the same month, a radical council member proposed that a policeman should not be allowed to draw his gun except when he could later prove that a suspect was armed or endangering human life. This was too much for the Council liberals, who were convinced that every patrolman entering an unknown situation would be giving a potential killer a critical time advantage. But the Council did enact a gun control policy that forbade a policeman from firing at a fugitive unless he could prove that the fugitive was armed and an immediate threat to life. This was in contrast to a state law which allows an officer to "use reasonable force in arresting or preventing the escape of a person committing a crime."

In January 1973 the radicals intensified their campaign against the police. When the police chief asked permission to go to the state for funds to finance a departmental reorganization that would enable it to deal more efficiently with the drug traffic, Council member Hancock accused the police of trying to create "an undercover surveillance mechanism with everything necessary to spy on people." Another radical Council member termed the request (which recommended lumping the burglary, narcotics and stolen property details in one division), a "militaristic document formed by our local military."

During 1973 the City Council also placed restrictions on the police department's Miracode system, a computerized information bank developed with grants from the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration of the Justice Department, to the point where it had to be discarded. One of the purposes of the Miracode was to store fingerprints so that they could match quickly those of a crime suspect. The department had especially

wanted to include the fingerprints of 500 juveniles who had been convicted in criminal court, since nearly half the crimes in Berkeley were committed by juveniles. But the radical members wanted the system junked because as William Walker, a black supporter of the radical Council members put it in a hearing, "This smacks of a police state, designed to trap black kids."

While the radical City Council members were attacking the police department, their supporters were framing four propositions (to go on the ballot in 1973) that would establish a police review commission, a restrictive weapons policy, a rule that all policemen should live in Berkeley, and City Council approval of all mutual aid pacts.

Commenting on the proposal for a police review commission, the Chief of Police said that in 1972 there had been only 142 complaints against the police department (which had handled over a million calls and contacts) and that the majority of those who had made complaints said that they had been satisfied with the disposition of the complaints by the department's internal affairs bureau.

A second ballot proposition would prescribe a weapons policy that would, among other things, forbid the use of rifles, tear gas, and mace and limit the department to 12 shotguns which would have to be locked up and freed only in times of emergency. The restrictions would have been severe even with a police department that was notoriously trigger-happy. Berkeley police officers had never used their sidearms during the riots of the sixties, and in 1972, another year of heavy rioting, had only fired twice at human beings—both of them bank robbers.

A third proposition would require all police officers to live in Berkeley. The purpose of this provision, as stated in the petition circulated by supporters of the proposition, was to ensure that sworn personnel "have a personal stake in the quality of life" in the city and should "develop close relationships with the various neighborhoods and be known by and accountable to them."

Since Berkeley policemen patrol these neighborhoods day and night, and respond to thousands of calls for help each year, including many that require intervening in family quarrels, the real motive behind the proposition seemed to be stated further down in the petition: "help create a city police department composed of Berkeley residents in which minority groups are fairly represented."

If passed, the proposition would have fallen especially heavily on black policemen, 94 percent of whom lived outside Berkeley, and who, in view of Berkeley's housing shortage and inflated housing market, would have had great difficulty in finding decent housing at reasonable prices. The residency requirement also seemed to conflict with Section 50083 of the

California Penal Code which states that "no local agency or district shall require that its employees be residents of such local agency or district."

The fourth ballot initiative would require City Council approval of all mutual aid pacts with other police agencies, such as the California Highway Patrol, and the Oakland and University police forces. Such pacts, numbered in the hundreds, involved not only agreements involving civil disorders, but also many routine daily police activities. According to the police chief, City Council review of these arrangements, involving public hearings, would be impossible and would result in "blanket cancellation of all mutual aid pacts, which would leave the city isolated, unable to immediately obtain assistance, aid or even cooperation of any of the other agencies vital to the existence of a city within a large metropolitan area."

In the April 1973 City Council elections, which saw the liberals retaining their 6–3 majority on the Council, the voters rejected the police residency and the mutual aid ballot propositions, while approving those propositions restricting the use of weapons and setting up a police review commission. The police department was able to live with the new weapons regulations, but individual police officers were decidedly not willing to co-exist peacefully with the Police Review Commission (PRC).

From the date of its establishment, the Commission embarked on a campaign to cultivate suspicion about the department's integrity and efficiency. Although, in accordance with a Fair Representation Ordinance, each council member was allowed to make one appointment to each board and commission, the three members appointed to the Police Review Commission by the radicals dominated its activities. They were able to do so because they had a unified position, they gave much more time to their jobs than the other six commissioners, and they had had much more experience in dealing with the police.

All three of the radical appointees had records of persistent antagonism toward the department. One member who headed a police complaint center sponsored by the American Civil Liberties Union during the anti-war riots apparently was so embittered by the experience that she made no pretense of her hositility. A second radical member had been arrested during one of the demonstrations (the charges were subsequently dropped). The third radical member had repeatedly charged the Berkeley police with racism and brutality in connection with several arrests of his sons on misdemeanor and felony charges (for which they were found guilty). During the first years of the Commission these three members often served as members of the three-person trial boards which heard citizen complaints against police officers.

Individual police officers summoned before the Commission's trial board to answer charges of misconduct refused to testify on the advice of

counsel. Faced with this non-cooperation, the trial boards were forced to reach verdicts in these quasi-judicial proceedings solely on the testimony of the complainants—a procedure which reflected adversely on both police and the Commission, and which rendered the Commission's findings suspect.

The radicals' assumption that their antagonistic stance toward the police department was politically popular seems, in retrospect, to have been a political miscalculation, and another indication that they had misread the attitude of Berkeley blacks. A survey of 2,544 residents in various sectors of Berkeley undertaken by the Community Relations Unit of the Police Department in 1970—after the 1968 rioting and Peoples' Park—revealed that residents in six out of nine areas sampled strongly approved the department's service by percentages ranging from 80 percent to 96 percent. The lowest approval ratings, ranging from 59 percent to 77 percent, came from areas contiguous to the campus, heavily populated by white students and counter-culture people. In view of the radicals' charge that the police were especially insensitive to minorities, the results from the flatlands where heavy concentrations of blacks lived were significant. The two sectors of West Berkeley polled gave the police approval ratings of 80 percent to 85 percent.

These results confirmed what Berkeley police officers themselves have felt about public attitudes towards them in their patrol areas. In dozens of interviews conducted in 1973, 1974 and 1975 (when popularity of the police was supposed to be at an all-time low) by graduate students in the University's school of journalism and the author, the response was almost always the same. Regardless of their race, police officers responded that they felt their greatest source of support was in the black areas of West Berkeley and in the affluent hill sections of the city. They also agreed that they encountered the most hostility in the areas bordering on the University campus.

Any doubts that the PRC was dominated by members who were biased against the police should have been dispelled by 1975. Unmistakable evidence of such bias was their handling of an incident which occurred in January, 1974. During that month several black police officers appeared at a meeting of the Model Cities Board to discuss their opinions of the Berkeley Police Department. Although the officers were under the impression that the meeting was off-the-record, the substance of what they were alleged to have said was relayed to the PRC and the City Council. On the basis of these remarks the radical appointees on the PRC began a series of attacks on the department, charging it with racism without bothering to check with the officers involved or waiting for a response from the department.

In September the police department provided the PRC with a 27-page memorandum, based on interviews with 70 police officers, which took up line by line the accusations the black policemen were supposed to have made. Two things became apparent. First, of the 27 alleged complaints, only 7 had anything to do with racism—all others being criticisms of technical procedures of the department. Second, in one case of alleged racism the offending officer had already been severely disciplined although he was later acquitted of the charges in municipal court. Of the six remaining charges of racism, interviews with minority officers revealed either that they had not made the statements attributed to them or that they were unaware of such practices.

The PRC's first formal act on receiving the department memorandum was to appoint a subcommittee to evaluate it under the chairmanship of William Walker, a man who frequently accused the department of racism in connection with several arrests of his sons. Then the Walker subcommittee sat on the memorandum. Two years later Walker was still refusing any evaluation of the police department memorandum, although it had been on the agenda of every PRC meeting. Finally, when it became apparent that Walker was never going to issue the evaluation, the memorandum was forgotten. Meanwhile radical leaders, using the original accusations as a basis continued to accuse the police department of racist practices.

The campaign of radical Council members to discredit the police was bolstered by neighborhood organizations allied with the far left. A significant aspect of many confrontations between these neighborhood groups and the police is that it often brought them into conflict with black officers. An all-white Berkeley Tenants' Union cadre on Parker Street, for instance, made a practice of harassing any police officer, black or white, responding to calls on their block. Tenants' Union members were also prominent in organizing blockades of traffic on Fulton Street which ended in scuffles with the police and charges of police brutality, including the demonstrators' demand that a black officer be fired. In the south campus area, where radical political strength was strongest, police often had difficulty with hostile crowds, and on one occasion a black officer was physically harassed while making an arrest.

The message of the ideologues was that the Berkeley police were, in effect, a capitalist plot to suppress the masses. Oratory expressing this view was in plentiful supply at a November 1975 meeting of the PRC called to discuss the department's special weapons team. One radical speaker characterized the team as "armed, military storm troopers running about in our town," a thesis elaborated upon by a spokesperson for the Alameda County Communist Party, who said the real purpose of such

teams "is controlled by the ruling class . . . they are the terrorist arms of the capitalist class." Another speaker prominent in the far left of the radical movement described the weapons team as "legalized vigilantism" and "elite guards against the people." The PRC then voted to demand abandonment of the program.

Ironically, it was the PRC that proved the falsity of the long radical campaign to discredit the police department as racist, brutal, and irresponsible in the use of its weapons. In 1978, a Berkeley *Gazette* review of the five-and-a-half year record of the PRC revealed that, despite hundreds of thousands of contacts between the citizens and the police each year, the PRC had received only 337 complaints, nearly all of them of a minor nature. What is more significant, only three citizens charged the police with improper use of a weapon, and there were only 19 complaints about "unresponsive, negative, sexist or racist attitudes." Not one citizen accused a police officer of corruption.[5]

The exoneration came a little late. Directly or indirectly, the radicals' harassment of the department had caused a mass exodus of the department's most experienced personnel. More than 100 officers, for instance, had left the department in the period from January 1971 to March 1973—almost all of them resigning. (The total sworn personnel complement at the time was slightly less than 200 officers.) And the morale of those who took their places was not helped by the fact that budget cuts because of Proposition 13 meant that many of them would be fired at the very time when citizens, upset over an increase in violent crime, were demanding more and more protection.

Matters Postponed. Legislatures are like newspapers. They respond to events, to new happenings that have the makings of a violent controversy, not to chronic ailments that have been around so long that they have merged into the permanent political landscape.

This habit of legislatures may partially explain why the Berkeley City Council, over the past decade, postponed handling difficulties that have plagued the city for more than a generation. Instead, the Council itself went out of its way to involve itself in political controversies which, although guaranteed to produce a full house at Council meetings, were either ideological or over issues of marginal significance. While it spent time discussing rates for local parking meters and cable TV rates, drafting a message affirming the city's solidarity with the people of North Vietnam and passing a resolution supporting installation of traffic diverters on city streets, it did nothing to develop an objective system of evaluating the performance of agencies supported by public funds.

[5]James Gray, Berkeley *Gazette*, Nov. 13, 14, 15, 1978.

At a time when citizens in every part of town were alarmed about violent crime and holding meetings on the subject, Council members paid little attention to crime prevention but argued over whether to order police not to arrest marijuana users. (Such an order, besides being legally invalid, was superfluous since the police were going out of their way to ignore the offense.)

The Council would spend the better part of a meeting deliberating over a zoning issue affecting one dwelling, while it persistently put aside coming to grips with one of the city's greatest land-use controversies—the problem of what to do with dozens of acres of waterfront, some of which were owned by private developers who were suing the city for the development rights.

One of the Council's more glaring acts of omission was its failure to conduct a continuing study of the city's economy, with the aim of finding ways to cope with a financial crisis brought on by a stagnating tax base and a steep rise in the cost of services the city was providing its citizens. One way of expanding the tax base would have been to encourage the influx of new light industry and commerce while taking steps to protect the old, with strict controls to protect the quality of residential areas. Instead the Council, under pressure from an improbable alliance of radicals, environmentalists, and neighborhood organizations (that in the suburbs would have been called "taxpayers' associations"), did all it could to discourage commercial and industrial investment in Berkeley. Through its appointees on the Board of Adjustments, the Council made a practice of denying use permits for legitimate businesses. (At the same time it routinely granted permits for massage parlors that ran ads for sexual services in the *Berkeley Barb*.) Simultaneously, the Council was making it almost impossible for new industry to locate or old industry to expand by a lack of resolve in bringing to completion an industrial park which would have brought the city many millions of dollars in additional tax revenues.

The Council made half-hearted attempts to deal with the problem in 1977 when, in the aftermath of a gloomy City Planning Commission report on declining business activity, it appointed an Economic Development Commission to tell it what the matter was. The people on the Commission had so little data to go on that they called in some outside consulting firms and held a series of public hearings to find out the nature of the problem. As of 1980, the Economic Development Commission had done little except issue a report which wrung its hands over the situation.

One reason why the City Council paid little attention to the city's economy was that the business community was regarded as conservative, Republican, and therefore of little political consequence. An indication of the morale of the business community was the fact that the Chamber of

Commerce considered not taking a stand against traffic diverters because of a fear that it might hurt, rather than help their cause. The Council reinforced this inferiority complex by actions which sometimes bordered on contempt. On one occasion when the Board of Realtors notified the Council it wanted to discuss its proposal for low- and moderate-income housing, the Council refused to give it a hearing.

Even when the Council did spend a considerable time on some basic issues, it often did so in an erratic manner. In most cases the Council dealt with land-use problems only when forced to consider an appeal of a ruling by the Board of Adjustments. The fact that neither the Council nor the Board had a coherent policy on land use was pointed out on one occasion by a Superior Court Judge who charged the Board with being "capricious." A study by a graduate student in the University of California School of Journalism came to a similar conclusion, that Board of Adjustments members improvised much of the time on the basis of insufficient information and that their decisions were often influenced by personal whims rather than strict interpretation of zoning ordinances.[6]

The Council could not make up its mind on another issue closely tied to land use. In discussing its new proposed Master Plan, it could not decide whether to insist on strict enforcement of building codes. While the Council had passed a Residential Repair and Inspection Program to bring rental dwellings up to code, it was not inclined to commit itself to strict code enforcement on an across-the-board basis, because it might give landlords a pretext to raise rents. The Council attempted to solve its dilemma by supporting what in effect was a selective, hence inequitable, enforcement of building codes.

The Council's approach to compliance with zoning ordinances was similar—in essence a policy of selective non-enforcement. Over the years, particularly in the hill areas zoned for single-family dwellings, many hundreds of homeowners had built one or more "in-law" apartments for which they received substantial, often exorbitant rents. Strict enforcement of zoning laws would have meant that many people would have to be evicted, increasing the housing shortage. In addition, such a jolt to the economy of the hill areas would have produced serious political repercussions.

So the Council decided to look the other way, except in cases where an individual raised a fuss about a violation. On this issue, radical and liberal Council members were not so far apart. Liberal Council members got their greatest support in the hills, and radical Council members were well aware that strict enforcement of fire, zoning and health laws would antagonize a large number of their supporters who lived in tightly packed communes in

[6]Patti Fisher, Berkeley *Gazette*, July 21, 22, 23.

violation of many of such ordinances. The people who suffered as a result of the selective non-enforcement were the families who took the zoning restrictions seriously and obeyed them.

At the same time the city could be very harsh on violators of zoning laws and building codes. One weapon to justify the imposition of strict controls on what owners could and could not do with their property was a Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance which gave the Board of Adjustments the authority to dictate whether an owner could demolish his house or whether he could be forced to rehabilitate it, so that a dwelling unit would not be lost. The Board even made it clear on some occasions that if the owner did not landscape his property, or display a sign which met the Board's aesthetic standards, he might find himself denied a permit.

The result was a system of double standards. One owner who wanted to tear down a dilapidated, uninhabited cottage on his property so that he could expand his small plant facility next door was forbidden to do so. Another property owner was prevented from rehabilitating an old building for business purposes because the Board decided it wanted the building demolished to make room for a parking lot. A third applicant was denied a use permit for a business on the grounds it would require parking spaces and would attract traffic.

The Council's double standard was illustrated by a radical Council member, who at one meeting in 1976 stated that she would not report any neighbor who had illegally converted his house into a two family residence because this was a "victimless crime." A few minutes later, however, after this Council member found that a large real estate firm had been involved in what seemed to be an illegal conversion, she demanded that the city attorney ask the district attorney to prosecute the corporation to the full extent of the law.

The Council has also displayed a split personality on the subject of housing. It has periodically evinced an interest in improving and expanding the housing stock, but it has also supported neighborhood organizations that have sought to have open land in residential areas earmarked for parks rather than housing. While expressing sympathy for students caught between a housing shortage and high rents, Council members have been unsympathetic to plans of the University to build student housing on a portion of Peoples' Park. They have vacillated on a University of California proposal to acquire property being vacated by the California School for the Deaf and Blind for student housing as well as administrative space. And, pressed by neighborhood associations, the Council proposed that several acres in a prime residential zone suitable for low cost housing be set aside as a public park.

The tendency of both liberal and radical council members to side with

the advocates of open space has its roots in politics as well as principle. Council members know that advocates of open space can mobilize an energetic cadre of property owners because their interests are directly affected. They also know that if they oppose these homeowners they will stand alone because the general population is either unaware of or indifferent to the issue.

Rarely have Council members questioned the validity of the argument that the city needs more open space. The city already has a reservoir of park land that could serve a city of two or three times its size. Added to its own 43 parks totalling almost 200 acres, Berkeley has access to dozens of acres of the University's campus—much of it wooded or open space—and two East Bay Regional Parks practically within its borders which total over 4,000 acres.

A spot survey of the municipal parks the city does possess reveals that many of them have been allowed to deteriorate to the point where they have become a detriment to the surrounding neighborhood. One example is a small park on Berkeley Way near the heart of the city, which is now regarded as a public nuisance by nearby residents. Another park, near Berkeley High School, is known as a center for dope transactions and a gathering place for petty criminals who according to one high school administrator "come on campus pimping our girls, selling dope, and causing trouble."

In essence the drive of neighborhood organizations for more open space amounts to a different kind of exclusionary zoning, not as vulnerable in the courts as many of the restrictions U.S. suburbs have enacted to ensure low densities or to rule out low-income groups.

Another subject which the Council has postponed dealing with is the need for a reorganization of the city government. A common criticism of Berkeley city agencies is that they are unresponsive, that many of their functions overlap, and that they operate too often in isolation from one another. Similar objections have been raised about the operations of the 33 boards and commissions whose unpaid members are appointed by the City Council. The participation of members is often irregular, with the boards often functioning at less than full strength because of personnel turnover and Council delays in filling vacancies. On occasion boards have been forced to adjourn meetings for lack of a quorum. There has also been some question as to whether the system of boards and commissions is democratic, because Council members on occasion have appointed people with whose views they were not entirely familiar, or who become inactive, allowing a minority to control the board. Consequently, some boards have followed policies directly counter to the views of the Council majority. Such behavior might be regarded as a sign of healthy, indepen-

dent thinking, or it could also be seen as a frustration of an elected majority on the council by an unelected majority of a commission.

Given this situation, it might be assumed that the Charter Revision Committee appointed by the Council would have examined both the administrative agencies under the city manager and the commission system. But the committee, composed of more than 40 people, gave the subject little attention, spending most of its time searching for ways to whittle down the power of the City Manager.

The only explicit proposal to reorganize city government was made by City Manager John Taylor in 1974, but the City Council approved only one of his ideas—a recommendation that all of the city's housing activities be consolidated under one department head. Proposals for combining other agencies, or abolishing some entirely were rejected, as was Taylor's recommendation for a Citizen's Resource Center to assess the quality of city services, to hear citizens' complaints, and to disseminate information about city problems.

The Citizen's Resource Center might have been one way to meet the need, to design a reliable way of measuring the effectiveness of public or private agencies supported by public funds. In making its budget decisions, the Council has had to rely almost completely on what the funded agencies have had to say about themselves. The Council has paid no attention to suggestions such as that of Margaret Watson, an experienced observer of city affairs and a former assistant to the City Manager, that the City Auditor should monitor the effectiveness of publicly-funded agencies as well as their receipts and expenditures.

There is plenty of evidence that the administration and implementation of several federally financed activities under city control has been decidedly inept. Among the failures were the Economic Opportunity Program and the Model Cities Program, both of which were afflicted by internal squabbling, lack of planning and unqualified staff. The Model Cities Program became so chaotic that the city manager in effect put it into receivership, notifying federal authorities that he had appointed one of his own staff members to administer the project. Despite the expenditure of millions of dollars, a West Berkeley Industrial Park remained in limbo more than 15 years after Council approval. More recently, a 1977 investigation of the Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA) program revealed that while CETA had a relatively good record in training and job placement, a number of organizations had spent substantial sums of CETA money with nothing to show for it.[7]

Sometimes it seems as if the Council does not want to know how its

[7]Judith Telfer, "Some CETA Money is Squandered Here," *The Daily Californian*, June 17, 1977.

money is spent, particularly in cases where the organization involved has a vocal constituency with some semblance of political support or where the proposed activity seems like a good thing to do. If the Council had known all the facts, it seems highly unlikely that it would have given its unanimous approval for a $52,000 contract for services from something called the Center for Environmental Symbiotics or a grant of $20,000 to the Berkeley Tenants Organizing Committee, a political organization specializing in rent strikes.

On rare occasions the Council's lack of information about its grantees is dramatized during a City Council meeting. A few years ago during the course of a public hearing, the Council discovered it had granted nearly $20,000 to an organization calling itself "That's My Mama Too," although the group had never received county accreditation for its proposed home for wayward young women. But the money had all been spent, somehow.

In a New England community run by a parsimonious town meeting, where budgets are scrutinized down to the last dollar, such an oversight would have produced howls of indignation from every quarter of the political spectrum. But in Berkeley the revelation caused hardly a ripple.

The Democratic Process. One of the most astonishing features of the city's political and governmental system is its tolerance of widespread abuses of the democratic process. City elections may well have been decided by falsely registered voters. Appointed officials have made a practice of selective and inequitable enforcement of city codes and policies. Individual citizens have been insulted and slandered in public meetings while city officials looked on approvingly.

Indications of gross irregularities in the electoral process were brought to light as far back as 1973, by former Republican Mayor Wallace Johnson. After examining the voter lists, the Mayor reported there was good reason to believe that Berkeley elections for several years may have been heavily influenced by voters whose eligibility was suspect or who simply did not exist, at least in Berkeley.

For those who might be inclined to think that the Mayor was straining at gnats, some of his main points bear repeating:

> In November 1972 there were 93,057 registered voters in Berkeley when according to the 1970 census figures there were 91,000 people eligible to vote. In the 1972 election the ballot proposal for a runoff to ensure election by a majority vote was defeated.
>
> Of 93,057 postcards mailed first class by the city clerk three weeks before the 1972 election to all registered voters, 18,404 cards were returned by the post office because the addressee couldn't be located.

A check of the names of these 18,404 cards revealed that 4,569 of these missing persons had voted in the November 1972 election.

An on-site search for a sample of 100 of these voters "typically revealed that there was no forwarding address, no current telephone listing by name, and no information to be had from permanent residents at the address of the person sought."

In 1972, in the census tracts south of and adjacent to the University campus there were 24 percent more people registered as voters than were eligible to register. In fact, there were 2,405 more registrations than the total population of the neighborhood, including men, women and children.

Before the April 1973 election, of a mailing by the city clerk to the total list of registered voters, 7,840 cards were returned as undeliverable. A check with the city voting records indicates that 913 of these missing persons had voted in the election.

Certainly the way voters are registered in Berkeley could lead to large-scale abuses. For instance, persons may register at any one of numerous tables on the University campus without producing a single piece of identification or proof of residence. It is quite possible for one person to register dozens of times under different names. As long as those names are voted in an election, they will remain on the voting list. And a law passed by the state legislature makes it possible for a person to register simply by sending a postcard to the registrar of voters.

Four years later, all indications were that the situation had changed very little. In advance of the 1977 Council elections, the Berkeley Democratic Club, worried because the phantom voters uncovered by Johnson were centered in areas favorable to radical candidates, conducted a brief probe of voting lists. Some of the same locations cited by Johnson as fictitious residences popped up again. Two or three houses, one of them presumably inhabited by 22 registered voters, turned out to have been vacant for many months. And in 1981, just prior to the City Council election, it was discovered that 129 voters were registered at such places as a youth hostel, the University Lutheran Chapel, a rental mailbox service, the Berkeley Free Clinic, and the Waldorf Bar.

The Council's indifference to abuses of the electoral process was paralleled by its apparent lack of concern about the legality of many of its own actions. On many occasions, sometimes against the advice of the city attorney, the Council approved ordinances and policies of doubtful constitutionality and which were later challenged, often successfully, in the courts. A few examples of such ventures onto shaky legal grounds, some already mentioned, was its approval of a hiring and promotion system for

public employees based upon ethnic and racial distinctions, its refusal to allow private owners of waterfront land to develop their property, its ban on smoking in public places, and its orders to Berkeley police to refuse cooperation with federal authorities in apprehending military deserters and to refrain from making marijuana arrests.

The Council's collective attitude seemed to have been, in the disapproving words of former Council member Sweeney, that it should not worry too much about fine points of the law in such cases; if a policy seemed to be socially or politically desirable, pass it and put it to work. Then, even if the policy was eventually declared invalid, at least some good would have been accomplished in the interim.

Nor was the Council overly solicitious about the reputations of individuals involved in public controversy. An example of the Council's failure in this request occurred in 1974, after an off-duty policeman named Charles Crane had wounded a 13-year-old black youth whom he claimed had fled after burglarizing his car. When the Council took up the matter, people in the audience accused the officer, whom they referred to as "Mad Dog" Crane, of attempted murder. Some Council members also joined in the hunt.

The only vigorous dissent was voiced by Council member Henry Ramsey, the black law professor, who pointed out that the official investigation of the incident had not been completed, and that his Council colleagues knew little or nothing about the case. Nevertheless, the Council voted to ask the Alameda county district attorney to prosecute Crane for attempted murder. The district attorney refused to prosecute, stating that the policeman had not violated any state law in the use of his weapon. But unfavorable publicity given Crane at the city council meeting and the radicals' campaign for his dismissal was enough to convince the City Manager to fire Crane despite the recommendation of a city-appointed arbitrator that he be retained on the police force.

The city was to pay heavily for its handling of the Crane affair. Five years later, the State Supreme Court ordered that Crane be reinstated on the police force, a reinstatement that would cost the city $73,000 in back pay.

The Council also left itself open to criticism by its tolerance of abuses of individual rights by some of its appointed boards and commissions. It offered no remonstrance when in 1977, the Board of Adjustments at a public hearing allowed a police officer to charge than an applicant for a business use permit had been a dope peddler. Although the chairman of the Board was a lawyer, he allowed the officer to elaborate on his accusation even though the police department had never brought charges against the person in question.

Other practices of the Board also raised questions about its fidelity to due process. While applicants for business use permits ordinarily are not slandered personally, they frequently hear their businesses characterized by neighborhood organizations as attracting the "wrong element" to a neighborhood, charging outrageous prices, selling an inferior product, or contributing to neighborhood deterioration—accusations for which little or no substantiation is offered by the accusers or demanded by the Board.

In addition, the Board of Adjustments, in the opinion of journalists, land-use experts, and at least one Superior Court Judge, has gone far beyond its mandate of seeing that zoning regulations are adhered to, to grant permits for uses that conform to zoning laws and to interpret zoning and planning directives. One of the country's most respected experts on land use law, John Costanis (at the time a visiting professor at Boalt Hall, University of California, Berkeley, Law School) said that most Berkeley zoning matters end by being decided "intersocially rather than legally."

"Any discussion of law is irrelevant to Berkeley," he wrote. "I sometimes think we are living in the midst of the nineteenth century communes in Paris rather than twentieth-century America."

Costanis's statement appeared in a series of articles on the Board of Adjustments that appeared in the *Daily Californian* in March, 1977. The author, Benjamin Clavan, a doctoral candidate in the University's Graduate School of Environmental Design wrote that "in case after case, the Board has operated on tenuous grounds."

> These professionals, businesspeople and housewives compete with no one. No city agency from above effectively counsels them. No advisors seem to be able to sway their opinion. Even the courts provide no real guidance. Such freedom becomes dangerous after a point. It gives nine men and women the right to control the life of an entire city. They might represent as fair a distribution of people in beliefs and opinions as the elected city council which appointed them, but their power makes me shudder.

(Any criticism of Berkeley's boards and commissions must take account of the fact that the members are rarely unanimous in their opinions. Like the Council, every board has its dissenters, but, unlike the case of the Council, the substance of the minority viewpoint does not ordinarily reach the public.)

Sometimes, however, a board member will express public disapproval of the failure of his colleagues to protect the rights of individuals with whom they are dealing. Such a case occurred in November 1974 when the Police Review Commission called a hearing to air the grievances of a group of demonstrators who had blocked traffic. For nearly two hours a

long line of speakers, including some who had been arrested in the melee, accused certain police officers by name of having brutalized the demonstrators. Describing the absent police officers, as "Fascists," "pigs" and "madmen," they demanded that the officers in question be fired. Although the Commission members knew that the policemen could not defend themselves in advance of a trial where they would be testifying against those arrested, they made no effort to stop the performance. Instead, most of the commissioners encouraged the crowd to attack the policemen in absentia, watching without protest while speakers addressed insulting remarks to the Chief of Police.

The spectacle was too much for Commissioner Stan Friedman, an attorney who in addition to his practice with a San Francisco law firm is an active member of the American Civil Liberties Union. After the hearing he said he was thoroughly disgusted with the notion of such a trial-by-audience—comparing it to proceedings of the House Unamerican Activities Committee—and that he would never be part of such proceedings again.

The fact that the arrested demonstrators were later found guilty and that no lawsuits were ever filed against the officers was of no value to the policemen involved. The attacks on their reputations and their professional competence had received wide circulation in the press. As for the Police Review Commission which had acted as a midwife for the accusations, it never acknowledged publicly that the charges had been false, something it tacitly admitted by failing to file a complaint against the officers.

Citizen Participation. Mary Widener, the wife of the ex-Mayor and an influential politician in Northern California Democratic circles, says that one of the best things about Berkeley is that so many people participate in the affairs of government. Former Council member Loni Hancock, the ex-Mayor's most persistent critic, agrees.

There is considerable evidence, however, to suggest that citizen participation in Berkeley's governmental processes may not be as broad or regular as in some much smaller communities which have highly developed political parties and a New England town meeting style of local government.

Attendance at City Council meetings, for instance, is usually very low, for a city of Berkeley's size, except when some particularly controversial (and frequently irrelevant) item is on the agenda. The audiences at meetings of Council-appointed commissions are frequently outnumbered by the commissioners. In the past many of these commissions have operated at less than full strength, because of the Council's failure to fill vacancies promptly and the irregular attendance of many commissioners.

The neighborhood organizations are not particularly good examples of grass-roots citizen participation. The few that are active and influential are concentrated in the wealthier sections of the city. Like the block associations on New York's West Side, or suburban taxpayers' groups, one thing they have in common is that they are dominated by property owners who have little or no interest in the problems of other poorer, less organized neighborhoods.

One issue that raised questions about the credentials of the neighborhood organizations was the controversy over the plan to set up several dozen traffic barriers and diverters to block traffic out of selected residential areas. The planning commission held numerous hearings on the plan, encouraging neighborhood groups to respond with suggestions. On the basis of these hearings, the city went ahead with the barrier plan. Their installation brought waves of protest from the very neighborhoods which the barriers were supposed to benefit. Large numbers of people who had not been heard from wrote letters, denounced the neighborhood leaders thought to be responsible for the plan, and joined in a movement to repeal the barrier plan by putting the issue on the ballot. Within a matter of days, an anti-barrier petition had obtained the signatures of more than 10,000 voters.[8] (The anti-barrier initiative was defeated by a narrow margin.)

If any organization could be said to have established a claim to represent a neighborhood, it would seem to be the Claremont-Elmwood Neighborhood Association. Not only did it have a reported membership of more than 1,000 people—ten or twenty times that of most other neighborhood groups—but its constituency was located in the most expensive residential enclave and inhabited by three members of the City Council. But a five months' study by John Jacobs, a graduate student in journalism at the University, concluded that while CENA had no serious competition in its announced role as the voice of Claremont-Elmwood, its governing board was controlled by a group of like-minded individuals who ordinarily set policies without conducting a broad canvass of their constituency.[9]

Whatever success the neighborhood organizations may have had as lobbyists for their own islands has not been matched by the success of their leadership in citywide political campaigns. A prominent member of the Oceanview Committee and the Black Caucus was defeated in every try for public office, losing contests for a place on the Rent Control Board, the Poverty Board (50 votes would have been enough to win), and the Executive Committee of the Peace and Freedom Party. When the head of

[8]In February 1978, the traffic diverter system was ordered removed by an Alameda County Superior Court Judge. In July 1980, the State Court of Appeals ruled in favor of the city. The plaintiff appealed the decision to the California Supreme Court, which also ruled in favor of the city.

[9]The study was published as a series of articles in the *Daily Californian*, June 2, 3, and 4, 1976.

the North Berkeley Neighborhood Association indicated she was interested in running for the City Council, her bid was ignored. The president of the Le Conte Street Neighborhood Association was at one time endorsed for the City Council by the Berkeley Democratic Club, but he was not elected.

A more recent example of the neighborhood organizations' lack of political clout materialized before the 1977, 1979 and 1981 City Council elections. Neither the Berkeley Democratic Club, nor the Berkeley Citizens Action, successor to the radical April Coalition, took the Council of Neighborhood Associations seriously enough to include any of their leadership in the slates they endorsed for City Council in those election years.

There are two main reasons why the Council of Neighborhood Associations (CNA) in Berkeley is relatively ineffective. The CNA does not include a wide variety of organizations and institutions—churches, parents' associations, cultural and social groups, service organizations—which have formed the backbone and given credibility to neighborhood movements in other cities. An example of such a group that has demonstrated its ability to give a forceful voice to a broad range of associations is the Strycker's Bay Neighborhood Council (SNBC) on Manhattan's West Side in New York City. The SNBC acts as a representative to a wide spectrum of cultural, religious, social, educational and racial groups in a 40-block area whose population at one time was roughly equivalent to Berkeley's. The West Side's block Associations (the West Side's equivalent to Berkeley's neighborhood associations) are only one element of the constituency the SNBC attempts to coordinate.

The SNBC has something else which the CNA lacks: well-informed, skillful political leadership that has a realistic view of the needs of the whole community—that understands that no section of the city can prosper at another's expense. This fact seems not to have penetrated the consciousness of the leaders of the CNA, whose public statements have been sometimes parochial and politically naive.

Three years ago an ex-Socialist and former supporter of the radical movement named Leo Bach spoke up. He said that although neighborhood associations are unrepresentative, "self-serving and self-appointed," they have "set themselves up as a second layer of government."

"Anybody can become a neighborhood organization," he said. To prove it he formed the Hearst Street Park Association with himself as the only member and paid his $5.00 dues to the CNA, thereby becoming a member in good standing. He attended CNA meetings regularly for a while, where he was regarded as a pain in the neck. Then, after he had made his point, he stopped going.

Three years later he was elected to the City Council.

Do-It-Yourself Legislation. The initiative process, common to all California communities, is another device for increasing citizen participation in government, or circumventing the will of the people, depending on one's point of view.

The process works as follows. If somebody doesn't think the City Council is doing what it should be doing, he can concoct his own legislation. That somebody doesn't have to be a registered voter, or a resident of Berkeley, for that matter. All the somebody needs to do is to put a summary of the proposed measure at the head of a petition, gather the necessary number of signatures and get it to the Town Clerk on time. The City Council then has the choice of passing it without alteration or submitting it to the voters. If the measure is to go on the April ballot in odd-numbered municipal election years, it needs only 5 percent of the total votes cast for Mayor in the last election, usually not more than 1,500 signatures. If the measure is to go on the ballot of a general election in even-numbered years, it requires 10 percent of the votes cast in the previous mayoral election.

Then, after election day, if the ballot measure is approved by a majority vote it becomes the law of the land, at least in Berkeley, or until such time as it is thrown out by the courts as unconstitutional, as often happens. Examples of ballot initiatives approved by the voters which in recent years have been declared unconstitutional have been measures having to do with rent control, decriminalization of marijuana and redevelopment.

In view of the fact that more and more committees throughout the country have begun to examine the possibilities of do-it-yourself legislation (Senator James Abourezk of South Dakota introduced a bill in 1977 setting up a national ballot initiative), the experience of Berkeley with the system would seem to have some significance. Conservatives and liberals complain that the ballot initiative is the radicals' way of bypassing the efforts of duly elected Council members. The radicals say they resort to the ballot initiative unwillingly because it is a costly, time-consuming way of doing business, but they see it as a last resort against a City Council generally controlled by liberals.

"The thing about the majority" (this was before the radicals gained control of the Council in 1979), said radical Council member John Denton, "is that they want to appear responsive to the electorate, but they are not willing to do what the electorate wants. That's why there are so many initiatives."

But if the majority of the electorate has felt betrayed by its representatives on the Council, it has not chosen to indicate its resentment by using the initiative process. Almost all of the ballot initiatives have been sponsored by the left.

Another explanation of the radicals' affinity for ballot initiatives came

from a young lawyer, David Mundstock, who shared office space with Denton. Mundstock has helped write many of the initiatives, and it is his opinion that the purpose of a ballot initiative is to upset the apple cart.

"The initiative is revolution with the ballot box," he said. "It's a challenge to the majority wherever the majority is. Therefore, it is a hostile act, and it is to be treated as such by the people in power. The very act of initiative is an act of rebellion. If you have power, you don't need the initiative."

Mundstock's theory that the initiative was an instrument of revolutionary change would be hard to prove, however. Of all the initiatives that appeared on the ballot between 1971 and 1979, the only one that would qualify as distinctly unusual was one the radicals didn't support—a proposal advanced by the far left that city employees be paid 40 hours' wages for 30 hours' work.

The other initiatives recommended changes that were hardly precedent-shattering: ballot propositions for rent control; election law reform; a police review commission; changes in law enforcement policies; amendments to the plan of the West Berkeley Industrial Park which crippled its implementation; a Fair Representation Ordinance giving each Council member power to appoint one member of each city commission; and municipalization of power facilities. One successful initiative sponsored by the radicals, the Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance, had a distinctly conservative ring, appealing especially to middle-income and wealthy property owners who wanted their neighborhoods restricted as much as possible to single-family residences.

There are a number of questions that have yet to be answered about the initiative process. To what extent does it advance or weaken the cause of representative government by setting up another legislative system in competition with an elected legislature such as the City Council? Does it increase or decrease the influence of the individual citizen on the shaping of public policy? Is the initiative process a democratic way of enacting legislation or just the reverse? And is it a sound and logical basis for the enactment of public laws?

Democratic liberals object not so much to the initiative process per se as they do to the way in which the ballot propositions are written. Former liberal Council member Henry Ramsey has complained about initiatives because they were badly drafted, contained unworkable or ambiguous provisions, or discriminated against one group in favor of another.

Ramsey charges that the initiatives are rarely understood by the people who vote on them. "Pick 50 people from anywhere in Berkeley and ask them if they've even read the initiatives," he comments. "Probably 40 of them haven't. Then ask them what these initiatives provide, and they'll

say Mom, apple pie and the American Flag . . . Take the Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance, for instance. How are you going to vote against that? The reason you have all these goddam things on the ballot is that it takes the signatures of only a small percentage of the voters, and the people who put them together are smooth. They give them the right title, the right preamble, and the right objectives."

There are certain facts which any analysis of the initiative process must take into consideration. It is clear that the initiative process is an alternative form of law-making that competes with an elected legislative body. Unlike an elected legislature which is compelled to hold public hearings and public debates on legislative proposals, the framers of ballot initiatives are self-selected, and are able to exclude the public and the press from their discussions. It is also clear that whereas the full text of the initiatives worked out in these private sessions may run to several printed pages, the description of the substance of these initiatives as they appear on circulating petitions, on the ballot and in the voters' handbook are grossly oversimplified and often misleading. Finally, at least in Berkeley, Council member Ramsey's charge that the initiatives are often poorly drafted and discriminatory is borne out by the fact that so many of the ballot measures have been declared unconstitutional in whole or in part.

Communities considering the adoption of the ballot initiative must also realize that there is an increasing tendency to use the process as a fund-raising device and maneuver to get one's own partisans to vote on election day, not as a way of introducing legislation to be considered seriously on its own merits. A prime example of this tactic occurred during the 1979 Berkeley municipal elections when the BCA got on the ballot a measure calling upon the police to give the lowest possible priority to marijuana arrests and specifying that they lobby in the state capitol for decriminalization of marijuana. Not only were these provisions unconstitutional, but the whole ballot proposal was unnecessary in view of the fact the Berkeley police department already considered marijuana arrests relatively unimportant. The real intent of the ballot proposition was to draw out the vote of the pro-marijuana forces assumed to be for the BCA Council slate.

Berkeley is not alone in abusing the legislative process in this way. As Andre Mayer and Michael Wheeler point out in a September 1979 *Atlantic* article, "the increasing popularity of direct democracy, particularly in matters of broad social policy, has resulted in a growing number of . . . unconstitutional referendum questions. Most of the controversial initiatives approved by California voters in recent years have been invalidated, wholly or in part, by the courts." The writers then go on to describe the effect of this upon the average citizen.

> If the voters unwittingly adopt a measure later declared unconstitutional, frustration and alienation will be heightened. If voters do so deliberately, the exercise can hardly be deemed to be the considered act of responsible citizens. Use of the referendum for purposes best left to public opinion polls . . . can only devalue the process of direct democracy and justify the fears of those who claim that the American voter does not take his or her politics seriously enough to be trusted with unlimited power.

In sum, what appears on the surface to be a vehicle for increasing the citizen's participation in governmental affairs can also be a device that can be turned against him by small and well-disciplined pressure groups.

5 Law and Order

The Trouble with Cops. The national debate over the police has had a meaning much deeper than controversy over their proper function in defense of public order. The argument has gotten to the submerged issues of race, class, ideology, even the definition of crime itself. It is as if the contending parties had decided by tacit, mutual consent to select the police as the battleground for all of their conflicts over a vaguely defined political establishment.

The Berkeley police department has been at the center of most of the angriest controversies that have shaken the city. While Berkeley cops have been attacked in some quarters in much the same terms as police officers elsewhere, they are a very special breed. Berkeley policemen, in contrast to those of New York or Oakland, are usually approachable and far less secretive. Part of the reason for this is that, except in situations involving tight security, they are not discouraged by their superiors from communicating with the public.

Despite rumors to the contrary that they are perpetually in the combat zone, they spend much of their time just noticing things through a windshield and getting out occasionally to provide a variety of services ranging from serving as a surrogate therapist to acting as a protective escort for groups of old people on their way to the grocery store. Many Berkeley police have a sophisticated understanding of the city because they are called into situations that are off-limits to the rest of the citizenry.

The Action at Sacramento and Prince. Until recently, when they took to organizing public meetings on the subject, black businessmen on Sac-

ramento Street have had a hard time getting any attention from city hall or the City Council to their complaints that a rising tide of crime has been hurting business. Only the police department has responded with anything more than words of sympathy, by occasionally dispatching a two-man foot patrol to the infested area for a while.

One of the more interesting combinations who occasionally get called upon for this kind of duty are Tony Berry, a muscular, light-skinned black, and Danny Cataleta, a 200-pound white cop who wears combat boots and expresses himself in Damon Runyon English. At the time I accompanied them for a few days on one of these foot patrols, in the summer of 1974, the businessmen at Sacramento and Prince were particularly upset by a couple of gangland-style shootings, one of which featured a crowd in a limousine dusting off a local bar with automatic weapons and killing a bystander in the process. Berry and Cataleta were selected because they knew the territory and could clear the streets of anti-social elements without brandishing weapons or calling for help.

A graphic description of the corner at Sacramento and Prince which the Berry-Cataleta Patrol made "safe for democracy," as Cataleta put it, was given by Henry Paige, a black officer who handled followup investigations of felonies.

"It's an outdoor flophouse," Paige said. "The hypes and the criminals hang out there, and when they get hot they leave for about a month, but then they return to the intersection, like maggots coming back to a dead carcass. You can drive down the street and pick out every one of these cats by name. The alcoholics have a different trip—they're there all day, but about 8:00 P.M. they all go home. At 6:00 A.M. they're back again hustling drinks."

There's something magnetic about the corner, Paige thought. "Even when a guy knows we're looking for him, he'll turn up there sooner or later." A case in point was a man who, after killing one of Paige's friends, showed up at the Corner and was immediately picked up. Paige said that the street population at Sac-Prince resembles, except for color, the sidewalk people at the intersection of Haste and Telegraph, an area which the black community calls hippie town.

The advent of Berry and Cataleta on Sac-Prince produced a few lightning if not permanent changes. The two accomplished the transformation simply by strolling around and parking a paddy wagon on the corner where it stuck out like a monument to law and order. The technique the patrolmen employed to raise the apprehension level consisted of striking up conversations with the curbstone population, who were acutely conscious of losing caste by being seen talking to a policeman who knew their pedigree and hangups, and who addressed them by their street names of

"Riviera Joe," "Fishman," "Killer," "Playboy," "Boss Man," and "Monster."

Cataleta had a theory that the more harmless of the group—the hustlers, the disabled, the alcoholics—serve as a shield for the cocaine and heroin pushers. Cataleta's strategy was to move the less dangerous people to another area so that the hardcore criminals stood out. As an inducement for them to move, the police department fixed up a vacant lot on Adeline Street, a few blocks away, where they could sit and play cards, watch things happen, and not get arrested.

"But they like the Sacramento-Prince street corner," Cataleta said. "They don't like to take direction from authority figures. The merchants want us to move them, but we're repugnant to these characters. After all, we're down here rattling their cages. We've given them a permit, on the QT, that if they go to the Adeline park they can gamble as long as there are no knife fights."

When Cataleta was backing the paddy wagon into a parking space, he looked down into a Black Thunderbird and saw two men drinking. The two patrolmen got out and approached the car slowly, Cataleta going to the driver's window and Berry to the door on the other side. As they leaned toward the car both officers put their hands on their guns. The driver handed Berry a bottle in a paper bag, which he put on top of the car, and ordered the men to get out. The arrest was made, the charge being possession of open container of liquor and drinking in a motor vehicle. A radio check revealed that the suspects had a police record. The whole transaction proceeded quietly. Every sentence the patrolmen addressed to the black suspects began with the word "gentlemen."

Occasionally Berry and Cataleta run up against a youngster just as street-wise as they are, and the result is often a draw. One black teenager who had been in trouble several times with the police, hollered, "Want to buy a bike?" at Cataleta as he rode by on a brand-new orange Schwinn ten-speed. After the boy parked it and went inside a pool hall, Cataleta bent over, copied off the registry number of the cycle, and radioed the number in for a check. In less than half a minute the word came back that the bicycle had been stolen a short time ago. When the boy came out, the officers put him up against a car, searched him, told him he was under arrest and handcuffed him. The boy protested, said he had just borrowed the bike, and that he would be back on the street in 15 minutes. He sent off a friend to notify his brother, who was at the station when we arrived. Then came the game of button button, who's got the button. The brother said he had lent the boy the bike after he had borrowed it from his girl friend. Berry called the girl friend, who admitted that it was hers and that she had bought it from a man who sells stolen bikes. Yes, she knew the

bike was hot when she bought it. At this point Berry said the boy was being arrested for possession of stolen property. By the time the game ended it looked as if the brother and the girl friend might also be arrested: three people going to jail for one stolen bike.

A couple of days later, however, charges against the boy were dropped because it couldn't be proven that the boy knew the bike was stolen property. This still left the question of the girl, who did know it was stolen property, up in the air. This little problem was resolved when the boy indicated he could give the police information on a dope deal. Cataleta took the whole thing rather philosophically. "If the kid doesn't come up with something in a month, well, he's bound to get in trouble again, and next time the arrest might be made on a weekend when he has to spend at least a couple of days in jail no matter what." Cataleta's prediction that the boy couldn't stay out of trouble proved correct when the youngster was subsequently arrested for grand larceny.

Towards the end of this patrol the two strolling cops got a chance to do something spectacular which polished up their image considerably. When robbers mugged an old man standing in line at a local post office branch on Sacramento Street, some of the other customers managed to knock down one of the assailants and pummel him before he escaped. Meanwhile, somebody else rushed down the street to give Berry and Cataleta a description of the fugitives. Another courier met them on the way to the post office to give the direction of the getaway car. Within seconds the two officers were out in the middle of the street, pistols drawn and flagging down a car of the same description. When the men got out of the automobile the post office crowd identified them as the muggers and that was that. Law and order had come to Sacramento Street.

A Way of Becoming Somebody. Not all of the people who have become familiar to the cops are individuals with no place to stay but a street corner. Berkeley has a generous share of what the police call "crime families." Some of these families are of recent vintage—a commune of a dozen or so whites, for instance, who specialize in skylight burglaries and bomb plots. There are several black families, some of them residents of the city for several generations, whose sons are regular boarders at various California and federal prisons. Concentrated in the western part of Berkeley these families are well known to their neighbors.

The knowledge that one's neighbor may be about to burgle one's house leads to extraordinary defensive measures such as equipping doors and windows with vast arrays of special locks, wedges and bolts; and keeping the curtains drawn night and day so that the neighborhood footpad can't tell whether the family is away or at home or see what loot is in the living

room. Curtained windows also permit an occupant to observe the street without being observed.

Such measures give the homeowner a feeling of limited security, but they also pose psychological problems. Living perpetually by electric light in one or two rooms in a darkened house creates an impression of everlasting night. The various security systems through which the homeowner has to let himself in and out several times a day are a nuisance. Policemen are constantly having to go to the assistance of people who have forgotten their keys. The rituals associated with the defense of the home encourage mild forms of paranoia. One perfectly sensible West Berkeley woman, for instance, upon hearing that a neighbor's boy was back from prison became convinced that it was simply a matter of time before she became his next victim. When she noticed on returning to her house one day that the screen door had been gouged by a screwdriver, she called the police to say there was a burglar inside. It took the police an hour of questioning neighbors about suspicious characters before one of the woman's friends across the street recalled the homeowner had asked him to jimmy the screen door because she had locked herself out the previous morning.

Another byproduct of living in close proximity to known criminals is fear of reprisal. "An informant will call up and say I want to report a burglary going on across the street," one black patrolman reported. "But in the next breath they say when you come down here don't come to my house. When we ask who's speaking—click—they hang up. The older people especially don't want to get involved. They're afraid somebody would find out they're informing and they might get beat up. This leads to some pretty strange situations. There was one house on Derby Street which everybody knew was a center for ripping-off the whole neighborhood. When we finally raided the place, we took 18 people out of it, and every one of them was a burglar."

Driving down one West Berkeley Street the cop points at two black teenagers sitting on the front stoop of a small bungalow. The boys responded by yelling, "Hey, you got a problem man?" The patrolman, a tall man in his thirties with a goatee and a modified Afro, remarked that the pair are habitual burglars who make up in energy what they lack in finesse.

"There are a lot of families near this intersection where everybody in the family is a burglar from grandpop down to the baby," he added.

The patrolmen most familiar with the area seem to have established a rather relaxed, clinical relationship with the individuals they arrest with seemingly monotonous regularity.

Brian Oliver, a former member of the narcotics squad, who has a map

of the area in his head, said that six crime families live within about 300 feet of each other. He said that in the same area there are several Mexican-American families living in single-family houses who have never presented any law enforcement problems.

Oliver thought it's the men in the crime families who habitually get into serious trouble.

> The women, by common standards of law enforcement, have been in a helluva lot of trouble, too, but not compared to the men. These families all have a mother in the house, but the men dominate because there are more of them. The trouble is that the mother never does anything. She'll watch a kid steal a bicycle, then he'll run inside the house and then everyone else comes out on the front lawn when the officer arrives. I'll say, "Your son, I want to talk to him." "He's not here," she'll say. I'll say, "I want the bike." She says, "What bike?" I say, "That's not his bike, the one right behind you?" She'll say, "That is too his bike, he's had it for five years."

Oliver said that "these mothers have a deliberately induced blindness. It's not just a desire to protect. There are many ways to protect a kid without defending his stealing."

Each family specializes in certain types of crimes.

> One family goes for armed robberies. Another goes for auto theft. Even in elementary school these kids were robbers, stealing lunch money, then they graduate in their teens to street robberies. As they get older, every one of them, except one that got shot to death, were involved in bank holdups. They've all been in prison. And when they get out, they come back and do it all over again. I guess the only exception was the guy that got killed. He left his fingerprints on two burglary jobs and then split to San Diego, which is very unusual because generally they don't go far away, they just hang around.

Another kind of "family", a gang of drug dealers from East Oakland which has moved on Berkeley, sells up to $7,000 worth of heroin a day in a four block area in Sacramento Street. They have recruited a core of children, some of them as young as eight years old, to warn them of the approach of the police and to deliver drugs to the adult dealers (for which they are paid up to $200 a week) according to Dash Butler, whose latest assignment is chief of a special four man foot patrol to cope with the drug traffic. Ordinary police tactics in such a situation are ineffective and Butler wants to have undercover men move into this area.

Oliver said that he and some of the officers who know the area are closer to the crime families than anyone else.

These men that we arrest are not hostile or militant towards us. In a sense we're members of the group because we're part of their lives. Their attitude is that the man comes and takes me away for a while, that's it. Part of the deal. They will run home after they pull a job, and their families will mau-mau us when we show up, but they know that we know. The men would never resort to assault or violence on a police officer to avoid being cornered.

Another police officer, now no longer with the department, put the same idea in different words.

We're essentially the historians of these guys, their families. A lot of the kids robbed because of status. It gave them some identity. It was peer pressure. They were nobodies, nobodies in high school, where they didn't make any friends. Their life was on the street corner and inside those protective families. But they were somebody to the cops because we had to spend a lot of time with them. They talk to me, even though I have sent them up because cops are the only people that really know them and make them feel out of the ordinary. The sons of these crime families feel that police know them even better than their own parents, because the parents refuse to recognize what's happening.

A police lieutenant who has dealt extensively with the crime families concurs, and added that the boys are often so clumsy and blatant in their burglaries that it almost seems as if they want to be arrested.

It isn't always the mother's self-induced blindness that leads to trouble, Oliver thought. In one case both parents each do their part in presiding at the destruction of their children.

We had a search warrant on their house in a counterfeiting case. The son had brought some of the money home and had given it to the father, who had passed it around—gave it to girl friends, paid bills. Some of the girl friends worked in massage parlors. As soon as we walked up to the house they started throwing stuff out of the windows, bags of heroin, you name it. There was dope all over the yard. We went in and the mother is sitting in the living room. She says please move over so I can see the television. The father comes home—he sees himself as a sort of local folk hero—the old style gambler type. We took all the men off to jail. All the time the mother never stopped watching TV. She checked herself out of that family long ago. She was gone from there, even though her body's remained behind.

In another part of town lived a family in which two boys have been in difficulties with the police for years. When they have been arrested, each time on a more serious charge, their father has responded by charging the

police with brutality and racism. One police officer who over a period of time has dealt with the sons says one of them once told him he was guilty but that his father would "give him hell if he ever admitted it." As long as the boys were juveniles, their names were never published in the paper. But then things changed. After one son ceased to be a minor, he was arrested and charged with rape on two separate occasions, the second rape alleged to have been committed while he was out on bail awaiting trial on the first charge. The son is now in a state prison, where, by order of the court he is receiving psychiatric help.

Telegraph Avenue. The majority of the serious crimes committed in the South Campus area are the work of transients or non-residents who transformed Telegraph Avenue into a major drug dealing center for almost a decade—professional criminals operating with or without weapons and an occasional psychotic who considered the area a safe place to commit rape or murder. The South Campus area has many qualities which make it attractive to the criminal. Hostility to the police is more pronounced than elsewhere, and, until recently, the area has had a more tolerant attitude about traffic in minor drugs, prostitution and other "victimless' crimes than the eastern hill areas or the poor black neighborhoods in the western flatlands. The inhabitants of these latter neighborhoods would not have regarded with equanimity the spectacle of couples fornicating on the sidewalk as happened in front of Berkeley's Free Church, in Peoples' Park, or on rooftops during Telegraph Avenue's more liberated years.

The South Campus area also has another characteristic that makes it attractive to the prospective burglar. A great deal of housing is vulnerable to illegal entry: ground-floor rooms in frame houses and cheaply constructed apartments with rotting window frames and flimsy doors whose locks offer little resistance to a well-manipulated screwdriver. A city ordinance requiring landlords to install dead-bolt locks is widely ignored. Many of the students who inhabit these places are new to the city, all are away from their residence most of the day, and are not nearly as security conscious as seasoned residents. So, you have what Berkeley police describe as a happy hunting ground for burglars.

The prospects for a sizeable payoff are excellent. Patrolman Henry Paige said that "some of the teenage burglars with which this community is overly supplied pick hippies because they know that every hippie has a stereo system and dope stashed somewhere on the premises."

A veteran black detective corroborated Paige. "Take kids coming to school here from San Luis Obispo or La Jolla with their electric guitars, ten-speed bikes, flutes and credit cards," he says.

If these kids think they're safe, they'll find out soon enough they're

wrong. Burglars know these kids. A liberal Caucasian kid feels bad if he puts a finger on a black suspect. A black will go to a door at midnight, knock, and ask for Mrs. Adams. If nobody answers, they burgle. If a kid comes to the door and sees a black, the kid will be very nice, and he won't ask any questions or report it. They don't want to appear to have a racist thought. The kid would certainly question such a situation if it was a white knocking at that time of night. In cases where you ask for a description of the burglar, the victim will talk about clothes, height, weights and features. The fact that a suspect is black only comes out at the very end.

Black officer Dash Butler said the same applies to the families that live in the Berkeley hills. "The hill people tend to be liberal, and occasionally they get out of touch with reality. They see you come in on a call—a black officer—and if they've been victims of a black suspect, they hesitate to say so because they're afraid they'll offend you. They're afraid they'll lose their liberal credentials."

As a Berkeley student, Butler saw a lot of the riots and he says that few blacks participated.

He thinks that the black students who combined with white radicals in the Third World Liberation Front strike of 1969 betrayed themselves. I remember blacks hollering at blacks not to get involved, not to have anything to do with it. Here I was working to put myself through college, get a degree, prepare for a job, and guys were trying to prevent me from going to class. Some of these guys were whites, who when the whole thing was over would go back to their families and get a good job while the blacks would be stranded, and out of an education.

Dan Siegel, the student body president who issued the call to take Peoples' Park, was one of the white students who tried to persuade Butler to stay away from class. "Siegel was a smart guy. We used to talk, but we knew we hated each other."

The fact that the South Campus area was the most active scene for dealing in heroin and LSD and was a main stopping point for teen-age runaways, necessitated a heavy police presence that in turn meant a maximum number of ugly confrontations between the police and the counter-culture. Sergeant Darryl Bothwell, who worked with the Special Investigations Bureau (vice squad) during the Avenue's greatest period of drug activity, remembered that sometimes dealing with the bystanders was harder than catching a suspect.

In the summer of '68 we'd sit in front of Cody's Bookstore with binoculars and watch the dope deals go down, and then we'd radio units in from around the corner for the busts. I remember chasing a guy—it

> was so damned hot—through crowds of people up an alley and through the back door of a Mexican restaurant. Little did the suspect know that they'd locked the front doors and were mopping the floors. So I tackled the suspect with 75 people looking through the front window. When I shook him down, I found a baggie of speed in his sock and a syringe in his pants. All the while I had to contend with a crowd that was screaming "down with the pigs." It was a strange situation. We got people complaining all the time about the dirt, the crime and drugs on the Avenue—they wanted us to clean it up but then they called us pigs when we tried to do something about it.

Bothwell said the job would have been hard enough without the opposition of the street people.

> The heavier we applied the pressure, the cleverer the dealers and the junkies became. Females would sell dime bags [ten dollars worth of heroin] by transferring it with a kiss, then the D.A. would drop charges because we couldn't verify the contents. But that didn't stop our cleanup campaign. We kept on harassing the pimps and the dudes and the dope. Our methods weren't brutal, just persistent.

As a protective device, patrolmen gradually adopted the vocabulary of the street people and perfected the art of engaging in low-key philosophical conversations with onlookers, at the same time they were locking the handcuffs on a suspect or taking a runaway into custody. Many of these exchanges amounted to little more than tit-for-tat sessions; others would develop into debates on such subjects as the Bill of Rights, the Fourteenth Amendment, property rights versus human rights.

An example of such an exchange occurred during the picketing in 1969 of Tower Records, characterized by the picketers as an out-of-town corporation extracting money from the local community (it turned out that the picketers were being paid an hourly rate by a competitor). One day the policeman assigned to make sure pickets did not block Tower Records' entrance put up such a convincing argument about the right of free access that a hostile crowd finally melted away, airing comments to the effect that there was one cop who was a "cool cat," somebody who had a "real grasp of the situation."

It has not escaped the notice of people on the Avenue that the appearance of many patrolmen has changed. The spectacle of a black patrolman with a huge Afro bulging out from under his cap, or a white officer with long hair and a Moses-like beard created a vague impression that despite his outer garments, the man could not be all bad, an impression fortified by the officer's readiness to discuss the sociological roots of crime.

Although the police consider the South Campus area unfriendly, many of them would rather patrol in the South Campus area than drive around factories and lumber yards on the waterfront or in the hills where nothing much is happening. Most of them, despite their sarcastic remarks about the "hippies" and "creepy crawlers" on the Avenue, are genuinely intrigued with the wide assortment of flamboyant characters they encounter. Also, since Berkeley cops have a talent for groovy conversation, they like to "practice the language on the natives." Telegraph Avenue puts a cop on his diplomatic, legal and political mettle. Frequently an officer clearing the sidewalk of reclining bodies finds himself surrounded by a crowd that wants him to defend his choice of a career, explain his political philosophy and what right he has to push people around.

Sergeant Bothwell observed that a sense of humor helps.

> One sunny afternoon on the Avenue we noticed several people crawling around on their hands and knees looking for something. My partner and I, very community-minded, asked them if they needed some help in finding whatever it was they were looking for. One of them stuttered and said that a girl had lost her contact lenses. Well, we offered our assistance, and sure enough, we found what they were looking for—some tiny white pills, LSD tablets, that had fallen into a crack in the sidewalk. It turned out that two of the girls were runaways. We went to their crash pad and arrested 14 other people for dope, all of them runaways.

Bothwell thought he did them all a favor by arresting them. "They were pathetic creatures. They were junkies ripping people off around them, and they'd rip each other off too. The only way we could make them seek help was to make it so miserable for them that they couldn't function in that environment anymore."

Radical political activists in the South Campus area saw the police crackdown on drugs as a thinly veiled campaign to harass nonconformists, hippies and other counter-culture types of whose life styles the police did not approve. Citizen "patrols" were formed to follow patrolmen on the Avenue beats, take notes, and to argue with police. The radicals took particular aim at the police department's attempt to round up runaways. One radical Council member cited the subsequent abandonment of the runaway roundup as one of the major achievements of the radical minority on the Council, despite the fact that many of the runaway girls ended up apprenticed to pimps as prostitutes.

The police, however, did have allies among the Avenue population, the street vendors, for example, who had taken over the Avenue sidewalks to sell handcrafted leather items, jewelry, art objects, belt buckles, and so

forth, "cockroach capitalists" as they called themselves. Dash Butler said the street vendors were "always getting ripped off by characters who would come around, grab a handful of stuff and disappear around the corner. The vendor can't chase the guy unless he has a partner to stand by the merchandise."

One of Butler's favorite street vendors was a leather salesman named Sonny Dukes. "A real good guy, he supported the police. You couldn't miss him. He was immense, about six-foot-five and at least 250 pounds. To see him you'd think he was a biker, maybe he was a Hell's Angel for a while. Sonny was the first to give a hand to the cops when a cop was in trouble. He was honest in his dealings."

Dukes and other street vendors not only called on the police for protection, but they also called them in to adjudicate disputes between vendors over which vendor was entitled to which square of sidewalk.

As time wore on, and the hard drug scene worsened, the police found more sympathy with their efforts to bust the pushers. One sign of the change was that almost all of the Telegraph Avenue stores, even the funkiest of them, began to display the sign "Heroin Dealers Not Welcome Here."

Nevertheless, in certain pockets of the area south and west of the campus, residents treated the police as if they were a military occupation force. One such island of rebellion was the eastern half of the 2200 block of Parker Street, where some counter-culture communes had established themselves in frame houses.

"During the sixties this was the block where the Red Mountain Tribe lived," recalled Patrolman Henry Paige.

> They were the resident rioters. If you ever had a riot in town, they were right there. If you stopped on the block at night, you might get a rock or a bottle. The people in the commune all had whistles, so that when you stopped, they'd blow the whistles and get everybody out on the street. Then they would surround the patrol car and if you had to get out to chase a suspect, they'd get in your way and trip you. When you got back they would have let the air out of your tires or maybe splashed red paint on the windshield.

The war between the whistlers and the police eventually ended when the police hit upon the tactic of occasionally parking on the block in the wee hours of the morning, forcing the whistlers to get out of bed time after time, until, exhausted, they didn't whistle anymore. Paige didn't seem to resent the whole business. In fact, he said, it livened things up on the graveyard shift from midnight to morning. He also expressed grudging admiration for the whistlers. "As much as they dislike us, they had their

own ways," he said."They formed this group called PEEP. I guess it meant the Peoples' Emergency Enforcement Patrol. If one of the girls was attacked by a rapist or hassled, she'd blow her whistle and the other would come out to protect her."

One biographer of the people in the lower reaches of Telegraph Avenue was Danny Mercado, a young, cool, moustached Chicano patrolman who seemed to be most threatening when he grinned. As he drove up Telegraph Avenue at two miles an hour, he stared out at people on the sidewalks who stared right back. He supplied a footnote on one out of every five or six people.

Of a young woman in Levis with a big red patch on the seat who is cruising the street, Mercado said, "There's Josephine. She'll deal you or ball you." As we pass by a grocery store, a large girl sitting on the sidewalk waved at Mercado, and he waved back. "That girl. She beat me on a narcotics rap, and she likes to rub it in." A pause. "See that fatty on the sidewalk. He's spent more time there than I have in this car."

As we approached the intersection of Bancroft and Telegraph, Mercado spotted a Honda motorcycle going the wrong direction on a one-way street and he wrote the biker out a ticket. Rolling again, Mercado said his best arrest was when he caught a guy making off with a silver chalice he had stolen from a church on Easter Sunday.

At another Telegraph Avenue corner a girl in a pink blouse was smoothing her hair, waiting to cross. She was very appealing. "There's a dashing little girl," Mercado commented. "She spends all her time wishing she were a he."

Most of the people Mercado dealt with on the Avenue are known only by their code names, like the drifters on Sacramento and Prince. It was important for Mercado to know these names, so that if, say, the name "Sugar" comes up in the course of an arrest, he knows who Sugar is.

At a stop sign Mercado pulled up alongside a pair of black males in an MG convertible. They gazed at the police car and asked him how long it takes him to accelerate to five miles per hour.

"Hell, I can't even beat a Volkswagen in this heap," Mercado replied.

Up ahead were two young bedraggled girls in a battered coupe with an out-of-state license, trying unsuccessfully to back into a parallel parking spot. Mercado stopped just behind them and turned off the engine. After he had observed them struggling for two or three minutes, Mercado got out of the car, told the girls to get out and asked the girls for their licenses. The girls were antagonistic. They looked very tired and beaten. The sagging belt line of one of the girl's faded Levis did not quite cover her pubic hair. A radio check with the station brought the news that the driver of the car didn't have the right license, so Mercado inspected the car. By this

time a queue had gathered and there were 30 pairs of eyes watching from vantage points up, down, and across the street. Nobody was moving. A woman in denim walked over to the girls and talked to them while they leaned on the car in despair. Mercado was grinning.

The girls got into the police car and we went to the station. The driver had several outstanding traffic summonses so unless she put up the $40.00 owed, she would have to spend the night in jail. While she was being booked, her companion remembered that she had some money in the car. She brought it in: $38.00. There was a long silence. Then Mercado pulled out his wallet and put two dollars in the girl's hand.

A few minutes after the girls had driven off in their coupe, Mercado was back on the Avenue, telling a group of people drinking out of bottles in paper bags to break it up, which they did—all but one black teenager who stood his ground and wanted to know why he was being hassled. He talked loudly, excitedly about his constitutional rights while Mercado stood there, grinning, keeping his hands on his hips, never getting close.

The Sleazies. One brand of laissez-faire capitalism that has not come under substantial attack from Berkeley's political radicals is the business of whoring. The far left's lack of concern about the industrialization of sex in Berkeley can be attributed in part to a sympathy for any practices that run counter to the mores of what the left considered an up-tight, conservative, middle-class establishment.

Another political deterrent to police crackdowns on prostitution was the position of some radical feminists that women should be allowed to make their own decisions about the use of their bodies and that if anybody was going to be arrested it ought to be the male clients. In the opinion of the police, there was still another reason why the radicals seemed unconcerned about the massage parlors and other sexual service stations: the insistence of some radical leaders that prostitution, like marijuana smoking and homosexual activity between consenting adults, was a "victimless crime."

The radicals did not make a political issue about the large increase of prostitution in the 1970s. In fact the expansion of the city's sex industry, which put Berkeley in a competitive position with San Francisco's Tenderloin, was due to the efforts of a newspaper regarded as the spokesman for radical causes. Like any other business, prostitution needed an advertising medium to become successful on a grand scale, and the *Berkeley Barb* provided that medium. It is doubtful that Max Scheer, the original publisher of the *Barb*, realized when he started to run ads for explicit sex in the classified section that he had a formula that would prove the financial salvation of his paper. But by the mid 1970s the *Barb's* sex section had become a special supplement that dwarfed the rest of the paper, and,

in the process, had changed prostitution from a random activity into a major growth industry.

The industrialization of sex in its early stages was also aided by the hands-off attitude of most of the most powerful neighborhood organizations. The most politically potent of these groups were located in prime residential areas far from the areas that would attract a large prostitute population. To the Claremont-Elmwood Neighborhood Association and the North Berkeley Neighborhood Association, neighborhood preservation had one meaning—single-family residences, traffic diverters, open space, and small shopping centers. Neighborhood preservation had a very different meaning to the black pastor of the Liberty Hill Baptist Church just off University Avenue, whose parishioners were propositioned by hustlers as they emerged from Sunday services.

At first the Berkeley Police Department did not go out of its way to raid massage parlors or arrest street corner hustlers, but it did become thoroughly familiar with the economics of the business. Some of the information was gained during investigations of other crimes. Its Special Investigation Bureau (SIB) officers discovered that much of the money generated by the massage parlors ended up in the pockets of people who live in nearby suburban communities like Walnut Creek and Concord and in the city of San Jose, 40 miles to the south. The police know the names of some of these operators, who they suspect of having ties with at least one well-known Mafia family.

"These suburban characters were sleazies before they moved out to the suburbs, and they're still sleazies," said an SIB officer. "They are also into a lot more than prostitution." When this officer was assigned to track down a gang of jewel thieves, the trail led him to a "crime establishment" in Oakland. "These people were affluent Caucasians who drove Cadillacs. They were the lieutenants and the soldiers, who committed the burglaries, pimped and stole cars. They were working for the middle-class people that lived in Contra Costa County ranch houses who were into cocaine sales and owned several Berkeley massage parlors."

Ownership of the parlors, the officer said, has enabled the whites to move in on the pimping business, formerly controlled by the blacks. "An individual black pimp like Eddie L———, who has only two girls working for him, would rather spend his time washing and polishing his two Lincoln Continentals with the crazy wheels. He is no competition for the big boys."

Another special investigator added some other details on pimping and the sexual massage business:

> The white man who owns a massage parlor will employ 10 or 12 girls, about half of them white. Four or five of the girls are on his regular

> payroll. The others are working for black pimps. The pimp comes in and the white guy says I've got places for half a dozen, so the pimp supplies them. For a massage, the house gets two-thirds the price and the girl gets a third. If the girl who works for the white guy turns a trick, she gets to keep it all. That's what attracts the customers. But if the girl who works for the black pimp turns a trick, the pimp claims it all. If she turns a trick on the side, without splitting with the pimp, she'll get her head beaten in. Of course the pimp has to pay for his girl's rent, clothes and food. The owner of the parlor doesn't do that for his girls.

Some of the massage parlors serve as depots for stolen goods, the officer said. One of his acquaintances, a young woman visiting Berkeley for the summer, answered an ad for a receptionist and was hired on the spot. "I told her you're out of your mind. She lasted one day, came home crying, said the people were all carrying guns and that the manager was waving a .38 pistol threatening to get rid of one of the masseuses—a typical stunt pimps use to frighten the girls. The guy was buying stolen office equipment from juveniles."

On the subject of "street whores" the officer said, "The people of Berkeley are really naive, or they have tunnel vision. They think a whore does nothing but whore. I've known forgers who did nothing but forge, burglars who did nothing but burgle, but whores do everything. They have to by the nature of the game. They go as lookouts on burglaries, they conspire with felons to roll clients who sometimes get killed in the process, they peddle drugs and sometimes they jump out of windows."

Prostitution a victimless crime? The officer laughed.

> The B——— sisters were shot because they were whores. You don't live in Orinda, turn a trick in Berkeley, and then go back to Orinda to join the garden club. The sisters went where the whores go at 2:00 A.M., to a diner on Telegraph Avenue in Oakland for their bacon and eggs. There's nothing parked around there at that time of day but Caddies and Lincoln Continentals. Some pimp took a look at the sisters and said I'd like a piece of that action, only the trouble is he already had a chick with him. So the chick decided she'd fix that. She got out on the road and thumbed a ride with the sisters. Then when she got them up in the hills, she blasted them both. She killed one and left the other for dead.

By the middle 1970s with more and more Berkeleyans complaining about the situation on University Avenue, the police began to make more arrests, customers as well as the prostitutes. But the victimless crime theory died hard and the education process was slow, as one woman found out when she tried to organize an anti-prostitute patrol on

University Avenue. Although she received cooperation from the police, the abusive treatment her volunteers received from the prostitutes and criticism from the left that she was encouraging "vigilantism" made short work of her effort.

It was not until after the City Council election of 1977, with the election of four liberal Democrats to the Council, that the tide began to turn. Not only did the moderate Council majority lend its moral support to the drive against prostitution, but several of the liberal Council members joined an anti-prostitute patrol, the strategy of which was to occupy the hustlers' favorite street corners and engage them and their prospective clients in lively debate. Conducted against a backdrop of police cars, these dialogues had a depressing effect on the market.

Meanwhile a second front in the war against prostitution slowly developed in the Board of Adjustment, which began to take a closer look at means of limiting and controlling the massage parlors. By 1980 the city had revoked the licenses of a half dozen massage parlors which were fronts for sexual services. Despite the fact that the two remaining radicals on the City Council apparently clung to the theory that prostitution was a victimless crime (the two were conspicuously absent from the anti-prostitution patrol) more and more Berkeleyans seemed to be coming around to the opposite opinion: that at the very least the prostitution business was guilty of the crime of attempted murder—the murder of a neighborhood.

Super Cop. I decided to look up ex-police inspector Charles Crane for two reasons. For one thing, he was considered by many of his fellow officers as being Berkeley's super-cop. A man with a photographic memory and a walking Who's Who of Berkeley criminals, he was also reputed to be the officer who almost single-handedly engineered an offensive against the heroin pushers that finally turned the tide against them. I was also interested in meeting a man who had been referred to by radical political leaders at a city council meeting as a "mad dog" for shooting and wounding a 13-year-old black youth who, Crane maintained, had disregarded his order to halt after attempting to burglarize Crane's car. Although the District Attorney had refused to prosecute Crane, on the grounds that he had not violated any state laws in the use of his weapon, and an arbitrator recommended he not be dismissed, the City Manager fired him anyway.

At the time I talked to him, Crane lived in a three-story house designed by Berkeley's famous architect, Julia Morgan, on a road in the hills named Panoramic Way. When I arrived he was outside refinishing some second-hand furniture. He was an open-faced man in his middle thirties who looked more like a carpenter than a cop. In his living room there were

several pieces of old-fashioned furniture. On the natural wood walls he had hung an Indian rug and some colorful, very good semi-abstract paintings. Crane apparently shared the house, commune-style, with several other people. One of them, a blonde named Judy, served us coffee and then disappeared.

I was there for his opinion on the extent and nature of the drug traffic in Berkeley, how it related to the spread of prostitution and crimes of violence, and where the money was coming from which supported the whole business. The one item of information that interested me most, however, came up almost accidentally, in the course of Crane's description of some of the problems the police had had with the Black Panthers in the days when the Panthers were still heavily into guns and shootouts with the police. During this period, before Huey Newton fled the country to avoid standing trial on murder charges, the Panthers occasionally turned their weapons on each other, Crane said.

He had arrived on the scene shortly after one of these ambuscades.

> Ronald Black had told his wife he was going to quit the Panthers. He had driven up to a barber shop, the Magic Fingers on Shattuck Avenue, near the Oakland-Berkeley line. A couple of blocks away at Panther Headquarters was a loudspeaker blaring out hate messages from Cleaver. As Black got out of his car, two teenagers—a light-skinned black and an Oriental—got him in a crossfire. Black had a gun and they exchanged shots. When they shot him he fell on the sidewalk and rolled under his car. There was a group of blacks in the barber shop getting their hair fried. They came out with towels around their heads. I was holding Black, with bullet holes in his chest—he was dying and coughing. They all laughed. I asked if they saw anything. They said fuck off. The man's dying, but no matter what, I was a white cop and they wouldn't talk to me, even if it was a black man that got shot.

Why did this murder and the reaction of the bystanders pass so unnoticed in Berkeley? I asked myself this question many times after my conversation with Crane. The best explanation I could come up with was a vague suspicion that the plot was wrong, so I imagined different outcomes of the same criminal act. Suppose Crane had shot the black assailant and Black had vanished unharmed. Would the people with the towels around their heads have come out and laughed when they saw a white policeman standing over a black teenager dying on the pavement? Would the City Council have congratulated Crane on saving Black's life by killing his assailant, or would it have demanded that he be prosecuted for murder? Suppose the policeman, Sergeant Crane, had been killed instead of Ronald Black. Would the City Council have requested the District At-

torney to launch a special investigation of the Black Panthers? Would it have passed a resolution commending the dead officer killed in the line of duty?

All of these alternative denouements I constructed for the Black affair had had their parallels in Berkeley—policemen killed in the line of duty, blacks shot by white policemen, blacks murdered by other blacks. Basing my opinion of what I knew of the record of how the press and Berkeley politicians have reacted to events of this nature, I came to the conclusion that the simple fact that a human being has been shot to death on a city street is of itself of no great importance. Only when such an episode has the makings of a cause celebre is it transformed into a municipal tragedy. The killing of Ronald Black was not such an event. Neither in Berkeley nor in Birmingham, Alabama, is the murder of an obscure black man by another equally obscure black man the stuff out of which a great political confrontation is made.[1]

[1]On February 2, 1981, Inspector Crane was arrested for allegedly selling cocaine to a police undercover agent. He pleaded innocent, then changed his plea to guilty. He is awaiting sentencing.

6 The Politics of Prevention

Incident on Fulton Street. The City Council has refused to issue a permit, thus making it illegal, but the demonstration will take place anyway, on October 31, 1974. It has been well-advertised, and a Channel Two TV film crew has set up its equipment on a rooftop well before the 4:30 P.M. starting time. Various city officials are present. Only the policemen are out of sight, sitting in cars two or three blocks away. There have already been two demonstrations on this part of Fulton Street, a few blocks from a main traffic artery that during the rush hour spins off heavy traffic into this neighborhood. In this last demonstration four people have been arrested, three of them from Oakland, and the arrestees have registered complaints with the Police Review Commission charging police brutality. From the pictures in the *Daily Californian* it looked as if what had taken place were a number of wrestling matches, no guns or clubs visible, with the police clearly gaining the upper hand. Among the scufflers in the pictures I recognized Patrolmen Tony Berry and Danny Cataleta.

The purpose of this demonstration—called a "mill-in" because it will consist of people walking back and forth to block an intersection—is to get the city to close the street to traffic. Somebody had been killed by a car on the street a few months before, but the main reason for the mill-in is to improve the quality of life on the block by banning all automobiles from the street except those of the residents.

Promptly at 4:30 a crowd of about 20 young people, including 2 children, issues from a side street and gathers on the corner. Most are dressed in Halloween costumes. One is wearing a bag over her head; another woman's face is painted like an Indian about to go on the war-

path. Along with them is their own photographer, a big man with an expensive camera attached to a large-barreled telephoto lens.

The group clusters around a man with a bullhorn.

"Let's keep it cool," begins the briefing. "Don't do anything physical with the pigs. If they push you, move off. If they try to break up our blockade, then we go to another corner and start another one. Be sure to observe everything that happens so that we can use your notes in any complaint we make against the police. Afterwards we'll have a victory party. Bring booze."

During the last couple of sentences out of the bullhorn a police car drives by, Cataleta at the wheel, and the crowd throws some uncomplimentary remarks at the pigs. Then the crowd moves into the street, walking back and forth across the intersection. The children have some orange plastic cones, the type used to pinch off highway lanes, and they use them as megaphones, telling drivers to "take Shattuck, not Fulton; take Telegraph, not Fulton."

It is the height of the rush hour. As the cars come down the one-way street in a continual line, they turn either to the right or the left when they come to the mill-in. Some puzzlement, some frowns, but most of the drivers seem to think this is part of everyday Berkeley, and there are no challenges until a black man drives up in a red sports car. When he refuses to turn, the demonstrators argue with him. He responds by nudging his car through them so they let him pass.

Channel Two is taking pictures. Standing on the four corners of the intersection watching are the Chief of Police, a police captain, the City Manager, three members of the Police Review Commission, the Police Review Commission's special investigator, the city ombudsman, and radical council member Loni Hancock. Other than the Police Chief and the police captain, no policemen are visible at the intersection. The traffic congestion increases, with lots of backing and turning, but still no dented fenders or cursing. Then suddenly the street is empty of cars.

A few blocks up the street, where Fulton intersects the main traffic artery the police have put up red flares. They have closed the street.

Minutes later the demonstrators stage a victory celebration for Channel Two. When the TV lights go on, the man with the bullhorn reads an announcement that the City Manager is closing the street for a month, and then there are cheers and accusations of police brutality. The TV performance over, the crowd walks over to the main traffic artery and stands behind the police line waving signs announcing the closing of Fulton Street. Then the demonstrators move back to the place where the mill-in had started and break up into small groups, talking excitedly. When the man with the bullhorn reminds them of the victory party, the

demonstrators vanish, leaving the street to the spectators. It is raining and almost dark by this time.

Now that the battle is over, it seems like a good time for asking questions that Channel Two had not asked, so I approach the Chief of Police, Wesley Pomeroy, a stocky gray-haired man who had come to Berkeley's attention because as head of the security forces at the famed Woodstock festival he had managed to avert any large-scale violence. I want to know why the police had closed off the street in view of the fact that the City Council had refused to permit the mill-in.

"I ordered my men to divert traffic from Fulton because it seemed like the best thing to do to avoid trouble," he says.

"Weren't the demonstrators breaking the law by blocking traffic?"

The Chief turns away so I ask the same question of James Chanin, one of the police review commissioners.

"No, I'm not going to go for that one," he says. "Not going to discuss that one, no sir!"

Next I try Council member Hancock. Did the demonstrators break the law by blocking the street?

"It's a matter of opinion what happened," she replies.

"But you were a member of the City Council which refused to issue a permit for the demonstration."

"If you want to split hairs, you might say it was illegal. But that's a trivial aspect of the situation. The important thing is that the police have begun to act in a humane manner. I'm very glad the way things turned out. Besides, the demonstrators were right."

But if the demonstrators had broken the law, shouldn't they have been arrested?

By this time others are joining in. One man observes that "you have to bend the law sometimes." Another says the protestors weren't breaking the law because pedestrians have the right-of-way while crossing the street.

I return to council member Hancock. "If a law was being broken, how do you justify yourself or the police in making no objection?"

"There is no use in straining at technicalities," she answers. "The important thing is that nobody got hurt." Then she repeats that I am splitting hairs.

I find myself talking to a young man named John Cummings, who sets about to persuade me that the demonstrators are right. He is very earnest and sincere. "Policemen have a lot of discretion in what laws they enforce," he says. "For instance, if he sees somebody making an illegal left turn, he has the right not to make an arrest."

I bring up the subject of the Boston School parents who were attempt-

ing to prevent black children from entering a newly-integrated school. "Would you give these parents the same right to block a street as you give these demonstrators?"

"No, because the Boston parents were wrong in what they did."

"But who is to pass on whether an illegal demonstration is morally right or wrong before deciding to arrest or not arrest?"

"You're getting too involved with the trivial aspects of the situation," Cummings replies.

I try another question. "What will happen to all the traffic diverted off Fulton? Won't it go onto other peoples' streets?"

I don't pick up his answer because I am listening to someone a few yards away who is saying that if traffic is diverted permanently, property values on the block will go up.

Cummings and I are getting cold and wet so we say goodbye to each other.

The Great Rip-off. The western boundary of Berkeley is, for all practical purposes, a thunderous freeway. To the west of this freeway, along the bayshore, are hundreds of acres of filled-in land largely undeveloped except for three high-priced restaurants; a motel adjacent to a municipally-owned boat marina; and the Berkeley pier, a favorite spot for fishermen, walkers and gazers at sunsets. To the east of the freeway is a broad strip running the width of the city which houses most of Berkeley's industries, from lumber yards and small factories to the Cutter laboratories, one of the city's largest employers (600) and taxpayers.

A portion of this strip, almost entirely given over to light manufacturing and commercial activities, is a 93-acre parcel occupying roughly the site of Berkeley's original Oceanview settlement, which was itself the center of commerce in the city's earliest days.

More than 15 years ago certain events were set in motion which made this part of town the center of the longest controversy of twentieth-century Berkeley. The importance of the conflict, however, was not in its durability nor in the ill-feeling it generated. The real significance of the battle has been that it is a classic example of how a small, well-organized pressure group can use the political process, the courts, and the press to stop a federal agency and a municipal government in their tracks and paralyze a major community undertaking backed at its outset by almost every part of the political spectrum.

The catalyst who came forward in 1963 with the idea that precipitated this series of events was the then Mayor of Berkeley, Wallace Johnson, who, when he was not spending his time at city hall was running a highly successful Berkeley factory which produced metal scaffolding and au-

tomatic hoists. Like a number of other city officials and businessmen, Johnson was worried that unless Berkeley could increase its tax base and employment opportunities, it was headed for hard times in the next decade because of inflation and steadily increasing city budgets. One solution to the problem, he felt, was to attract more industry to the city, by creating an industrial park especially designed for light industry and segregated from residential areas.

Johnson thought the ideal location for this industrial park was the 93-acre parcel in Oceanview. The occupants of about three quarters of the parcel, as mentioned before, were commercial and industrial tenants. The one exception to the rule was a 20-acre section, roughly six blocks, along the eastern edge of the 93-acre parcel, where single-family homes predominated. Since this residential area was thinly populated, by about 70 families, it appeared that the job of persuading these families to move and relocating them in as good or better housing at rents and prices they could afford, would not be difficult. In addition, since many of the houses were small and in dilapidated condition, the costs of demolition and site clearance would not be great.

So Johnson proposed to the City Council in 1965 that the entire 93-acre parcel be included in a West Berkeley Industrial Park project (WBIP) with special attention paid to clearing and selling 14 acres of land within the 20-acre residential zone. After two years of deliberation and several public hearings at which almost no opposition materialized, the Council decided unanimously to go ahead and directed the city's Redevelopment Agency to implement the plan. Among those approving the scheme at the time were John De Bonis, the Council's most conservative member, and Ronald Dellums, the Council's most liberal member.

But during the two years between introduction of the plan and its approval by the Council a decision was made which, in the opinion of Mayor Johnson, would raise almost insurmountable handicaps to the completion of the WBIP. Johnson had wanted the WBIP to be financed entirely by the city through the sale of tax allocation bonds on the grounds that federal participation would entail bureaucratic delays that had frequently proved the death of many urban renewal schemes. But the arguments for federal funding, with the government putting up two-thirds of the money (4 million), were persuasive, and in the end Johnson went along with the others. In so doing, the Council lost control of the project.

In Berkeley, however, any firm movement in one direction almost always provokes an equally firm movement in the opposite direction. Within a short time, an Oceanview Committee, whose most vocal representative was a young lawyer named Stephen Bingham, was formed and proceeded to make life miserable for Redevelopment Agency Board members.

According to Michael Goodman, a professor of Architecture at the University of California and a Berkeley Redevelopment Agency (BRA) board member, Bingham was "so radical that only Dostoevsky could have described him. He was the perfect nihilist. Even the tenants' union people—he was at one time giving them legal advice—couldn't stand him. He used to give 20-minute speeches at agency meetings. I was friendly with him. He told me on many occasions what his aim was—to take over Berkeley by taxing business out of existence and turn it into a Socialist state."

While Bingham's philosophical objections to the WBIP may not have accurately reflected the feelings of other opponents of the park plan, they let him take the lead. On one occasion he and his supporters imprisoned the board members in the meeting room until the members agreed to a Bingham ultimatum that they declare a moratorium on future park development—an agreement that was subsequently repudiated by the board.

Unfortunately for the BRA board, Bingham had more credible allies in his fight against the park, including an organization called Peoples' Architecture, which included some faculty members and students in the University of California's School of Environmental Design. Events were also creating support for the anti-park forces.

The dispute over Peoples' Park in 1969 and the formation of the radical left political movement known as the April Coalition which openly avowed its hostility to the business community also spelt trouble for the WBIP. Anything that promised to confer advantages on the "corporate elite" was bound to arouse the Coalition's enmity, and when the Coalition elected three city council members in 1971, the anti-park groups were handed some real political firepower.

By the time Bingham vanished from Berkeley (he is still wanted by the police for having allegedly smuggled a gun into San Quentin prison for George Jackson, killed in the subsequent shootout with prison guards), the park opponents no longer needed him. In fact they were better off without his ideological harangues. The main themes of the park opponents by this time were that the WBIP would destroy a neighborhood of old but comfortable housing to make way for industries run by large corporations and that the park would be unfeasible because it would not attract industry because of Berkeley's high tax rates. The Oceanview Committee proposed instead, that the structures be rehabilitated as low-cost housing for low-income black families.

Underlying the passion behind the radicals' attacks on the WBIP was the knowledge that many of the local corporations had contributed to the campaigns of "moderate" Democrats who had run against the radical candidates for City Council. A project designed to bring more industries

to Berkeley would only increase this source of financial support. Opponents of WBIP were helped by the *Daily Californian*, whose editorials consistently attacked the WBIP and whose reporting was based largely on information supplied it by the Oceanview Committee and the staff of a radical Council member whose offices were in the same building as the newspaper.

There were major discrepancies between the *Daily Californian*'s view of the WBIP and that of the BRA, which had been charged by the city council with implementing the project. The Oceanview Committee, via the *Daily Californian*, cultivated the impression that scores of protesting tenants were being forced out with no place to go. Agency figures showed that by 1971 all but a handful of original site tenants had been relocated to standard housing at rents comparable to what they had been paying, and that, according to an agency memorandum to the city council in December 1970, they had expressed themselves as satisfied with how they had been handled. To counter the Oceanview Committee's picture of habitable houses on the verge of being bulldozed when low-cost housing was desperately needed, the Agency attempted unsuccessfully to show that most of the vacant structures and about-to-be-vacated dwellings were so dilapidated that they were beyond rehabilitation, and had been declared unsafe by building inspectors.

The condition of the structures on the redevelopment site was in plain view for anyone who cared to go through the buildings. Many of them were on the verge of collapsing, with vandals completing the job that shoddy construction, time and the weather had begun. Floor joists had been cut with power tools, floor stems had been weakened, plumbing and electrical wiring had been ripped out, anything valuable in the way of lumber had been stolen, staircases were dangling in mid-air, roofs were almost transparent. Despite the efforts of the agency to keep the places boarded up, plywood barriers had been ripped off repeatedly. Some of the abandoned dwellings had been set afire. The general aspect of the residential area slated for redevelopment was dismal in the extreme. Whatever else might be said about it, it was certainly not a neighborhood.

Because of the biased and superficial news coverage of the industrial park issue, still another important fact eluded most Berkeley citizens: the contradiction between the anti-park groups' public position favoring low-cost housing on the Park site and their private opposition to such housing in other areas in the city in their own neighborhoods. An illustration of this contradiction was the reaction of the North Berkeley Neighborhood Association (NBNA) to an informal suggestion by the Redevelopment Agency that moderate- or low-cost housing be built on an 11-acre section in the NBNA's neighborhood known as the Hearst Strip.

The NBNA leader, one of the most vigorous proponents of low-cost housing in the WBIP area, strenuously opposed the idea.

Most readers of the *Daily Californian* or the Berkeley *Gazette*, (which editorally supported WBIP) did not know that although the Oceanview Committee represented itself as speaking on behalf of the people directly affected by the project, only a handful of its members lived in or on the perimeter of the WBIP site. Furthermore, neither the press nor the Redevelopment Agency made any serious effort to test the Oceanview Committee's claim of grass roots support. Any regular observer at the weekly meetings of the BRA could see that Oceanview representatives rarely numbered more than six or eight persons. In most cases they were the same people, only two or three of whom were on-site residents.

Another fact that may have escaped the attention of Berkeley citizens was the inconsistency between the Oceanview Committee's formal position favoring rehabilitation rather than demolition and its less publicized views on the subject. As early as December 1971 one Lee Coe, then a leading spokesman for the Oceanview Committee, commented at a BRA meeting that "the Oceanview Committee did not care about the houses proposed for demolition, but simply wanted to stop the project." Coe's moment of frankness was not appreciated by others on the Committee. He began to play a less important role in the organization, which eventually initiated a series of unsuccessful court actions to preserve the buildings in question.

A remarkable spectacle developed as the controversy over WBIP went on. By 1976 a largely white radical political coalition claiming to represent the interests of minorities was aligning itself against a project that was supported by every black member of the City Council, a West Berkeley Neighborhood Association composed of black residents, black business leaders, and the black members of the Redevelopment Agency Board. Among the latter were Walt Gordon, former Governor of the Virgin Islands; Tarea Pittman, a pioneer in the civil rights movement of Northern California; and Henry Ramsey.

The executive director of the BRA at the time, Thomas Cook, was a tall, thin man with long sideburns and a soft-spoken apologetic manner who gave the misleading impression that he was easily intimidated. He had his own ideas about the nature of the opposition to the Industrial Park.

"To be blunt about it, we've been wary of the agenda of the opposition," he said.

> Their public agenda and their hidden agenda are two different things. You'll often find that people who loudly advocate low-income housing,

> when they are pressed, turn out to be something else. I find a deep-seated conservatism and opposition to change in the New Left here—it's similar to the opposition of the far right I encountered when I was in the federal government dealing with Pacific towns in the northwest. The attitude that there's nothing wrong with the barn until it falls down. I listened to the Birchers up there, and I hear the same views expressed in Berkeley by people who proclaim themselves as radicals. They get emotionally upset at seeing something torn down. They are psychologically prone to fear of change.

Politically the Oceanview Committee proved to be more than a match for the BRA. Much of its success in delaying the WBIP was due to the leadership of Hildur Kehoe, a grim and determined woman who emerged as the Committee's driving force by the mid 1970s. Kehoe, who lived a block or so away from the WBIP site, became the equivalent of a full-time, unpaid organizer for the anti-WBIP forces. To her supporters she was a woman driven by an intense dedication to the interests of the underdog. To her most outspoken adversary on the Redevelopment Agency Board, Professor Goodman, she "was a very intelligent woman who did good research and who hates society and rich people—she told me so herself."

Ms. Kehoe displayed a remarkable talent for getting favorable publicity for the Oceanview Committee by keeping in close touch with the *Daily Californian* and with the offices of radical city council members. Whenever the WBIP issue came up at a City Council meeting Kehoe was on hand with literature and well-briefed supporters both in the audience and at the council table.

If the council chamber was the first front in Ms. Kehoe's war against the WBIP, the weekly meeting of the Redevelopment Agency board was her second battleground. Over a span of many months, the contest between Ms. Kehoe's small band of Oceanview regulars and the Redevelopment Agency Board took on the characteristics of a ritual dance. In a typical meeting, Kehoe would start things off by planting a tape recorder on the director's table, then run an extension cord across the rug to the nearest socket. Almost as soon as the chairman, Minnie Ruth, an architectural designer, would proceed with the agenda, Kehoe would interrupt her with a complaint about a procedural matter. An exchange between the two would take place, ending when Ms. Ruth would abruptly turn to the next item of business. As the board conversed, Kehoe would interpolate her opinions. Throughout the proceedings, the Oceanview contingent would comment in loud whispers, then Kehoe or one of her supporters would again interrupt the directors.

Ms. Kehoe had a good sense of timing. She was, in effect, participating as another director.

Generally the tensions generated by this heckling stopped short of an explosion. Ms. Ruth's determination to keep her cool almost always got her through the meeting in fair shape, in spite of a red face which betrayed her anger. But there were times when people lost control and the Oceanviewers pelted Ms. Ruth and her fellow directors with epithets and obscenities, and charges of unethical and dishonest behavior. On one occasion a reporter from the Berkeley *Gazette* protesting such incivilities was threatened with a punch in the nose.

One of the regulars who used to heckle BRA board members was Bill Mor, a slight, dark, balding potter in his twenties who sometimes appeared at meetings in clay-splotched overalls and boots. Mor seemed an unlikely person to criticize the agency, since he admitted that if it hadn't been for the Industrial Park project, he wouldn't be anywhere near as well off as he was. He and two other potters were operating a pottery co-op in the area, and they jumped at the chance to move elsewhere when, after some preliminary sparring, the agency offered them what Mor said was a "good deal." After Mor located new space in Berkeley, the BRA paid him moving expenses and $2,500 in income which he estimated he would lose in the relocation process, and bought him a new kiln. That wasn't the end of the good news for Mor. The $2,500 represented capital he could invest in his new enterprise, and in his new quarters he had eight times the 1,000 square feet of space he had had in his old building, with better lighting, at roughly the same rent. His only complaint was that it took six months for Pacific Gas and Electric to connect gas lines with the new kiln.

"I became politically aware of the issues when Hildur Kehoe approached me," Mor said. "She came down and talked to me about it. She's very democratic about things. The sentiment in the neighborhood led me to oppose." He learned that the people in the redevelopment area "were not dealt with honestly," although he was not able to provide specific examples.

Mor admitted he disagreed with some things the Oceanview people wanted. He was "not so crazy about the Committee's idea of low-income housing going up there. I wanted it to stay the way it was, a place where arts and crafts people could find cheap, roomy places to work."

While the Agency's handling of Mor didn't make an ally of the potter, its arrangements with another influential member of the Oceanview Committee proved to be politically advantageous. During its early campaigns against the agency the Oceanview Committee's most voluble and indignant member was William Walker, a resident of the industrial park site, a member of the Black Caucus, and a Police Review Commissioner

with close ties to the radical members of the City Council. While Walker was publicly attacking the Redevelopment Agency, he was quietly negotiating through his attorneys the terms under which he would agree to be relocated. Although the BRA kept the negotiations and the settlement secret, on the grounds that such matters were "privileged", the Berkeley *Gazette* managed to get hold of the details. The BRA would pay Walker $24,000, the assumed market value of his house. Walker would purchase a home which had been located by the agency for $52,000 using the $24,000 from the sale of his house as part payment. The BRA would then give Walker $23,450 to make up most of the difference, and Walker would take out a $4,050 mortgage to complete the transaction.

Two things were clear. In exchange for a modest-sized and dilapidated house in a physically deteriorating neighborhood, Walker received a large, well-maintained, and architecturally superior home on the edges of one of Berkeley's most desirable residential areas. Second, Walker abandoned an active role in the Oceanview Committee.

The anti-WBIP groups did not confine their delaying tactics to harassment of the agency at its public meetings. The most formidable thrusts against the project were delivered in court. In January 1972 San Francisco Tomorrow, Inc., with several other plaintiffs including the Oceanview Committee, initiated lawsuits challenging the failure of the Department of Housing and Urban Development to prepare and file an Environmental Impact Statement on WBIP and two other redevelopment projects. By the time the case had been decided in favor of the plaintiffs and HUD completed and filed the EIS as required by the court, WBIP had been stalled for more than two years.

These and other, less lengthy court delays, severely damaged the prospects of WBIP. The expenses of the BRA continued to mount. Because of the delays, the BRA was vulnerable to charges that it was wasting the taxpayers' money. The BRA also found itself in difficulties with the federal government because it had not been able to keep up with its timetable. The lack of apparent progress gave credibility to the charge that industry was not very interested in coming to Berkeley. The charge had some truth to it, in view of the fact that as long as prospective buyers of WBIP sites were aware of the political difficulties the project was experiencing, they would not be willing to make any commitments to come in.

The barrage of unfavorable publicity about the WBIP, the inability of the BRA to get its message across, and the City Council meetings packed with opponents of WBIP, shook the confidence of many of the council's liberal Democratic majority which had continued the policy of its predecessors in supporting WBIP. As early as December 1971, under

pressure from the three radical City Council members, the majority agreed to a 90-day moratorium on project activity pending an independent evaluation. Although in succeeding years, this liberal majority routinely approved the BRA's requests, it seemed to become more and more disposed to put some distance between it and the Agency.

Gradually the impression grew that the City Council was tired of hearing about the WBIP, and that whatever troubles the plan was having were the fault of the BRA. The attitude was hardly good for the morale of the BRA board, whose members saw themselves as trying to carry out the directions of a Council majority that had abandoned them. And it is true that had the Council wished at any time to amend the plan or junk it, it could have done so and the BRA would have carried out the new directives. This the Council refused to do because the alternatives would have created severe financial problems for the city, and would have meant the withdrawal of federal funding.

Despite the delays and a bad press, by 1976 the BRA had made remarkable strides in implementing WBIP. At its biennial public hearing in March, a statement by BRA chairwoman Ruth revealed that:

> Since the inception of the WBIP, firms already in the area or moving into it had produced 344 new jobs, a large number of them held by women and minorities.
>
> Major environmental improvements had been completed, including reconstruction of 10 blocks of streets, undergrounding of utility lines, installation of new street lighting and landscaping, redesigning or reconstruction of several major warehouses and plants, demolition of several hazardous structures.
>
> In the eight previous months, every parcel of land available to the agency was sold.
>
> The project was already producing $286,000 per year in additional property tax revenues, this amount to rise to $550,000 by 1978.
>
> All but 8 of the original 70 families residing on the site had been relocated, and all but 6 of 33 businesses.

One site tenant who supported the WBIP at the hearing was Robert White, a partner of Truit and White, a lumber company that had been formed in 1946 on a small piece of land situated within the boundaries of WBIP. Several years ago, he said, the firm seriously considered moving out of Berkeley because of delays in getting the WBIP moving and fear that their property would be condemned so that it could be used for a freeway cloverleaf. The firm reconsidered when it was able to purchase

60,000 square feet of land that made possible a major expansion of the business, and was going ahead with plans to improve another 60,000 square feet of adjacent property.

The small corporation had contributed substantially to the city in the form of property and sales taxes, White declared, and it was firmly committed to equal employment opportunity. White reported that the contractor hired for the construction of the company's expanded facilities had employed the following percentages of minority personnel including some who were working in skilled operations: laborers, 94 percent black and other minorities; operating engineers, 45 percent; truck drivers 33 percent; cement masons, 100 percent; and foremen 100 percent. White pointed out that 18 percent of the Truitt and White company's employees were minority personnel, including a black female accounting supervisor.

White had scarcely sat down when Oceanview supporters returned to the attack, claiming that WBIP had never brought any jobs to West Berkeley, that blacks were not being hired and that the WBIP was not expanding the tax base. Then the last of the opponents of WBIP arose to speak, an Oceanview regular named Robert Switzer, who lived several blocks away from the WBIP site. Clad in overalls and brandishing a hoe, he strode in front of the room and shouted that the whole WBIP plan was a plot to kill the neighborhood and rip-off the poor.

"All this stuff about industry coming in is bullshit," Switzer said.

> If we stop it now we've got them by the balls. The whole energy crisis has got things jacked around. We don't need industrial land. Corporations aren't moving into Berkeley or California, they're moving out of the country where they're getting all the labor they want for 50 cents a day. They [the Redevelopment Agency] aren't going to get away with it any longer while there are people like us to fight them. Let's form a posse. There's got to be a law in this community for the rich as well as the poor. We'll get the goddamned bastards.

The meeting was unusual, however, in that the Oceanview Committee didn't get in the last word. It found itself outnumbered by WBIP backers, including Sarah Walker, a black representing the West Berkeley Neighborhood Association composed of black residents who had voted to support the park. But what happened at the hearing didn't make very much difference. The success Ms. Ruth outlined in her report never penetrated the public consciousness. The *Daily Californian* story overlooked White's statement, gave the impression that public sentiment was against the park, and didn't mention that an organization of black Berkeleyans had continued to stand up for the project.

And so the campaign against the park went forward, in the press, in the Council chambers and in the courts. One line of attack was for the Ocean-

view Committee to make veiled insinuations that the chairperson of the Redevelopment Agency and the Agency's executive director had engaged in corrupt practices. Then, faced with a request to provide proof, the committee members would disclaim any such insinuations. A second line of attack was a constant succession of lawsuits instigated by park opponents which, although almost always decided in favor of the Agency, accomplished their purpose of stalling the park. Still another delaying tactic was to petition government agencies to stop the park because it would destroy an archeologically valuable site and certain buildings of historical importance.

But the most effective weapons against the park were the old slogans and charges, repeated over and over, that the park wasn't financially feasible, that it was a rip-off of taxpayers' money by giant corporations, that dozens of people were being evicted from their homes and thrown into the streets, that a lovely neighborhood of old Victorian homes was about to be smashed by the bulldozers, and that low-cost housing for poor people, not factories, should be built on the site.

If true, these characterizations of WBIP would have made it impossible to understand how a City Council composed of conservatives, liberals and radicals could have unanimously approved the idea in the first place. But the charges weren't true. The best proof of the financial feasibility of the project was the Oceanview Committee itself: had the project been economically unsound it would have collapsed of its own accord and there would have been no need of an Oceanview Committee. As it was, every time the Agency had a plot of land cleared and free of legal entanglements it was quickly sold to new industries that created hundreds of job opportunities for Berkeleyans. Small businesses and industries, many of them local, not giant corporations were the beneficiaries of the park plan. Almost all of the site tenants had been relocated years ago. Far from being slightly damaged Victorian homes, most of the structures remaining on the site were shoddily constructed, decaying shells that would cost more to rehabilitate than to rebuild completely. And, despite all the Oceanview Committee's talk about low-cost housing for the poor, there were no funds available for such a program. Furthermore, the terms of the city's agreement with the federal government in essence forbade the construction of housing on the site.

In the end, however, the people who circulated these false or misleading impressions won. In the spring of 1977 the anti-park forces circulated petitions for two ballot initiatives designed to halt further development of the industrial park. One measure would dissolve the Redevelopment Agency board and transfer its functions to the City Council. The other measure would require the rehabilitation of existing structures in that area.

Enough signatures were obtained, the voters approved the measures in the April election, the Redevelopment Agency board was disbanded, and the City Council took over to see what it could do with the mess.[1]

Many of the signatures that were obtained that spring, and the heaviest support for the ballot measures, came from the students. I listened during a couple of noon hours in Sproul Plaza to what the signature seekers were telling the students about the industrial park. Sign up if you want to save a beautiful community, they were saying. Protect the right of black people to have a decent home of their own. Stop the big rip-off. Don't let them turn Oceanview into a tax-free parking lot for Spenger's restaurant. Line up for the people. Fight the big corporations.

And after listening for a while, the students would sign because they believed what they heard, they hadn't been to the place, and even if they were wrong they hadn't anything to lose.

Rent Strike. Poor blacks, Puerto Ricans, and whites in the ghettoes of New York City don't have much of a chance with their landlords. For the most part they never know who their landlords are because the landlord is a faceless corporation. The building superintendent, who is hired by the landlord to avoid the tenants' complaints and get them out if they cause trouble, often doesn't know where his pay originates. In New York it's the landlords who have the money, the time, the lawyers, and the law on their side. As it turns out, they also have the courts; the Department of Welfare (which pays the rents); the Department of Buildings (which overlooks violations of the building codes); and the Department of Health (which tolerates violations of health codes). With all this lined up against her, a black mother on welfare who withholds her rent for 48 hours will be out on the street before she even gets the name of a legal aid attorney. She may be in the right, but she always loses the battle.

In Berkeley, things are different. True, the city has more than its share of landlord Scrooges who seem to get away with almost anything. This became blazingly apparent when, after the passage in 1978 of Proposition 13, which reduced property taxes by an average of 60 percent, many

[1]By 1979 Berkeley citizens were still in the dark as to what the final disposition of the park would be. The executive director of the Redevelopment Agency was saying that the park was 70 percent completed, with another 20 percent to be finished by 1980. But by 1981 the city seemed to have abandoned any further development. While publicly expressing the hope that the unsold land would be used for housing, the Oceanview Committee members were not sure what to think. As their leader Ms. Kehoe put it: "We're in a much messier and confusing aspect of things . . . It's no longer the bad guys and the good, and totally unequivocal lineups. Ideologically it begins to get quite confusing." (Quoted from *The West Berkeley Industrial Park: A Case Study in Urban Redevelopment*, Jonathan Redding, unpublished paper, Jan. 21, 1979.)

landlords promptly raised their rents.[2] But Berkeley is also a place where the City Council has given tax money to tenant organizations to fight landlords, and where it is often the tenants who have the money, the time, the governmental support and the savoir faire to dish it out to the landlords.

The small landlords, that is, not the big corporate operators.

The experience of Richard Bachenheimer is a case in point.

Richard Bachenheimer has fared rather badly, on the whole, at the hands of his fellow citizens. They first inflicted damage on his person when he was leading a platoon of the 128th Regiment, 32nd Army Division, against a Japanese machine gun nest in the Philippines during World War II. An 81mm mortar shell fired by a U.S. artillery battery covering the assault exploded directly in front of Bachenheimer, killing 2 men and wounding 17 others including Bachenheimer. His leg might have been saved if there had been a helicopter around, but as it was he left that part of him behind in a field hospital.

I first became aware of civilian Bachenheimer through a poster glued to the wall of a dilapidated brick building, one of the oldest in Berkeley, that used to house the Golden Sheaf Bakery but now looks like an indoor parking lot. The poster resembled those FBI notices that paper the bulletin boards of post offices:

> WANTED RICHARD BACHENHEIMER
>
> in connection with malicious eviction of 60 tenants; conspiracy with local and state boards of realtors to disrupt and destroy a union of organized tenants; alleged embezzlement of tenants' security deposits; willful neglect of deteriorating neighborhood housing in favor of more profitable, hi-rise ticky tackys; obstruction of justice; willful distortion of facts before city officials of Berkeley, and fraud in the charging of rents.

Beneath full face and profile photos of the culprit, the poster provided additional information:

Description: age—over-the-hill
height—5′ 10″
weight—180
eyes—beady
hair—receding
race—rat
nationality—capitalist

[2]The Berkeley voters responded by approving a ballot initiative in November 1978 which rolled back rents to June 1978 levels and required landlords to pass on 80 percent of their property tax savings under Proposition 13 to the tenants. Landlords have attempted unsuccessfully to block enactment of the measure in court.

> CAUTION: Bachenheimer is known for his psychotic fits of temper at the sight of organized tenants. He frequently exhibits the characteristics of a "loser complex" and mental constipation. He has been seen in the company of lawyers Paul Koenig and Jack Provine . . . these legal manipulators are known lackeys of the speculative real estate conglomerates in the East Bay.

Since the publishers of the poster had not bothered to put their names on it, I spent a few hours attempting to locate Bachenheimer. Despite the impression generated by the poster that he was a fugitive, I located him in his office and found out that he was the target of a rent strike by an organization calling itself the Berkeley Tenants' Union Number 7. I decided to follow Bachenheimer and BTU7 into combat.

The strike, I learned, was the outgrowth of an earlier strike against several Berkeley landlords that had begun on April 1, 1970. On that day, a group of young white people of middle-class background and self-proclaimed revolutionary political philosophy, who had formed the Berkeley Tenants' Organizing Committee (BTOC),[3] declared a strike against rent-gouging landlords who were not maintaining their premises properly. The main objective of the strike was to persuade landlords to enter into agreements with tenants' unions recognizing the right of the union to bargain collectively on behalf of all tenants, to manage the properties, and to set "reasonable" rents. Berkeley Tenants' Union Number 7, composed of renters inhabiting two clusters of houses owned and operated by Bachenheimer, was to become the main tactical squad, so to speak, of BTOC rent strike. The BTOC did not attempt to take on the large, well-heeled real estate and management firms. Instead, the leadership decided to single out a small real estate company whose resources were limited and whose investors were local people who could be isolated and subjected to pressure. One of the real estate firms that fitted this description was Premium Realty, the corporate name for Richard Bachenheimer and company. Bachenheimer was an inviting target because he and his partners were political liberals who would be especially anxious to avoid being attacked as slumlords.

Bachenheimer had just taken back direct management of 130 rental units, located in small detached houses, from a management firm he felt had mismanaged the properties. When BTU7, composed of a group of tenants in several houses on Hearst Street and Parker Street, approached him with the proposal that Bachenheimer recognize them as collective

[3]One characteristic of the "revolutionary" tenants' union in Berkeley is that they have displayed no interest in organizing low-income blacks or concerning themselves with the problems (which are immense) of residents of Berkeley's subsidized housing project.

bargaining representatives for the tenants, he agreed to do so. The union had softened him up by appealing to a number of Premium Realty Democrats. Bachenheimer thereby became one of the few, if not the only, landlords to recognize the union.

After two months of hard work, Bachenheimer gave control of 24 units of his properties in the two separate locations on Hearst and Parker Streets to BTU7. Under terms of the contract the union would manage and maintain the properties, choose the tenants, write up the leases, set the rents, and collect them. From these rents, BTU7 would pay Premium Realty enough to amortize the mortgage and pay the investment, taxes and insurance. BTU7 would also put up a security deposit to ensure performance of its responsibilities during the three-year duration of the contract. Also included in the contract was a $60.00 a month payment by the union into a fund that would be used to purchase and replace household appliances when they become obsolete. Premium Realty agreed to pay all the legal costs of the settlement, amounting to $14,000.

From time to time, once the contract had gone into effect, Bachenheimer met with an eight-person union negotiating team to iron out details. During these sessions it became apparent to Bachenheimer that there was going to be trouble. Some of the tenants had refused to sign the agreement, and they informed him privately that they had done so because they did not feel the union was negotiating in good faith. These tenants had become further disturbed when, at meetings of the union, a split developed between the "moderates," who complained that the union was not maintaining the properties adequately, and the "hard-liners" in the union leadership, who shouted them down.

As time went on, many of the moderates dropped out and moved away, including the union treasurer after he concluded that the union leadership was impossible to deal with. One move that didn't sit well with some of the tenants was the closing down of a gravelled parking lot in back of two of the Hearst Street houses, which would have brought the union $3,000 in parking fees over the three-year period of contract. The union used the space for repairing cars and setting up chicken coops.

It didn't take Bachenheimer, a close man with the dollar, very long to know how much trouble he was in for. Increasingly nervous about what the union was doing to maintain the properties, he volunteered the names of reliable plumbers and carpenters, but none of them ever heard from the union. When Bachenheimer tried to inspect the properties, he was denied entry.

Then in late 1972, the battle began in earnest. The union demanded that Bachenheimer replace a leaking roof on one of the Hearst houses. Under the contract, the landlord was supposed to pay for repairs only if the

particular job would cost more than $500. Bachenheimer got an estimate slightly under the $500 mark, and informed the union it was responsible for the repairs. A stalemate resulted, and the leaking roof became a running source of controversy for many months until the union finally had it fixed for less than $200.

The affair of the roof set the pattern of warfare. The union would demand a new stove. Bachenheimer would ask them to get an estimate for repair. The union would not respond. Individual BTU7 members would appear at his office with complaints, but would refuse to identify themselves. The union did not, as stipulated under the contract, get written leases from the tenants, nor did it provide Premium with the names of the tenants. Identification of his tenants was made even more difficult because many of them moved in and out, with others taking their places for a few days or weeks. During the subsequent court proceedings, some tenants were listed at several different addresses.

Bachenheimer became convinced that the tenants union was preparing a record for an eventual court proceeding. The union's position was that Bachenheimer was deliberately letting the premises deteriorate so that he could get a permit to demolish the properties and sell out to a developer at a quick profit.

When the original agreement expired in 1973 Bachenheimer refused to renew. The union on its part refused to vacate and charged that Premium Realty had "stolen" the $4,000 security deposit it had put up as a guarantee it would maintain the properties. In response, Bachenheimer served the tenants with eviction notices, thereby beginning a series of court proceedings that were to last two years. During this two-year period BTU7 collected rents and withheld them from Premium Realty, depositing it in a BTU7 fund.

While the eventual outcome of the court proceedings may have been in doubt, there was no mistaking the advantage the tenants' union had in its contest with Bachenheimer. On its side, it accumulated a war chest from the withheld rents which financed its campaign against Bachenheimer with Bachenheimer's money. Bachenheimer, deprived of all income from the union-occupied properties, had to meet his mortgage payments, taxes, insurance and legal fees out of his own pocket. Knowing that every delay worked to its benefit, the union sought to draw out the court proceedings as long as possible.

Bachenheimer was unable for weeks to get the tenants properly served with court summonses. On the first attempt the process server went to the first house. A person came to the door and then ran off without saying a word, jumping the fence and warning the other tenants. The process server was unable to raise anyone that day or the next. When he returned

on the third day, the tenants warned each other by blowing whistles. The process server would hear a guitar being played, but nobody would come to the door. By the time he had finally served the summonses, he had been bombarded by water-filled balloons, a tenant had leaped out of the bushes and squirted inky fluid on him, and he had been surrounded by crowds of children, adults and dogs. After the summonses had been served, the union filed a motion to quash on the grounds of improper service of summons, declaring that the process server had never come to their doors. It was not until December 10, 1973, three months later, that the union filed an answer to the summonses.

The first trial held in Berkeley Municipal Court, before a demonstrative audience of tenants and union supporters, was decided in favor of the union, on the ground that the notices served on the tenants were not in proper order. Directly after the verdict some of the jurors went to a victory party arm in arm with the tenants. At that point it appeared that Bachenheimer, his own resources exhausted, would have to drop the case. But he succeeded in interesting the California Board of Realtors in the issue, and with their financial support he was able to bring the tenants into court again, this time in Superior Court.

Neither in court, at his home, or in his office was Bachenheimer allowed to forget the jam he was in. In the weeks before the second trial, the license plate of his wife's car was stolen, and the gas tank was filled with brown sugar. One evening the family returned to find the word "PIG" scrawled on the sidewalk in front of the house and on a wall of the house. On several occasions, the house was picketed by BTU7, and when the Bachenheimers' 12-year-old daughter would go around the corner for her guitar lessons the pickets would surround her and ask "Aren't you Bachenheimer's daughter?" Leaflets were distributed throughout the city with a caricature of Bachenheimer under the headline "Slumlord Attacks Community," and when Bachenheimer would go across the street from his office to lunch he would find himself surrounded by a jeering escort.

When the second trial started, tenant supporters again occupied most of the seats in the courtroom. After several instances of disorderly behavior, including defacement of the bailiff's desk with insulting graffiti, the presiding judge cited one of the offenders with contempt and sentenced him to jail. But although there was henceforth order in the courtroom, it did not prevent Bachenheimer from being spat upon as he was leaving the courtroom, and several times he and his attorney had to be escorted by a sheriff's deputy.

Bachenheimer had other headaches to content with, including a powerful city agency headed by supporters of BTU7. On August 14, 1974, the Berkeley Housing Advisory and Appeals Board sent a memorandum to

the city council taking the tenants' side of the dispute, declaring it was ordering Premium Realty to correct all deficiencies in the rental properties. Bachenheimer, not the tenants, it said, was responsible for the deterioration of the housing, and it charged Premium Realty with deliberately neglecting the property in order to obtain demolition permits. Furthermore, the memorandum claimed the properties in question seem to have been maintained by the occupants "in a neat, clean and reasonably attractive manner." Not only had an official agency of the city taken the side of one part to a dispute in litigation in the courts, but it had refused to send Bachenheimer a copy of the memorandum, nor would the Board tell Bachenheimer the identity of the author of the memorandum.

As it turned out, the effect of the intervention of the Housing Advisory and Appeals Board was political rather than legal. After a protracted trial, a verdict was returned in favor of Bachenheimer. BTU7 was ordered to vacate the properties and to pay Bachenheimer $52,000 in back rents. But in the words of Jack Provine, Bachenheimer's lawyer, the verdict may have proved Bachenheimer was right, but it didn't do him much good.

"The tenants scattered to the winds," he said. "Most of the people whose liability was clear were judgment proof. Bachenheimer didn't collect a cent that was owed him."

Any doubts as to who had won the war were dispelled on eviction day, April 1, 1975. BTU7 had circularized the city announcing a peaceful demonstration and a press conference, in front of the Hearst Street houses to be evacuated and posted by the sheriffs. By 9:00 A.M. a 4-piece band was playing, and a crowd of 40 people were standing in the sunlight in front of the houses. The tenants had already left. As a parting salute to their one-legged landlord they had hung crutches in the trees and from the porch ceilings of each house. While the crowd waited for the sheriffs to come and padlock the houses, they were served coffee and doughnuts by strikers wearing armbands.

The air of the gathering was festive, everyone stimulated by the fact that the press and TV had arrived. While waiting for the sheriffs to appear, speakers warmed up the audience through a portable microphone. The band played "John Brown's Body," then some calypso music, at which point a young Chicano woman with huge sunglasses did the shimmy. Tenant supporters in the crowd included several radical activists: Florence McDonald, the short, pleasant-faced radical candidate for City Auditor (she was elected); Mark Allen, Communist candidate for the City Council; Eugene Turrits, a member of the Model Cities Advisory Board who was playing saxophone in the band; James Chanin, chairman of the Police Review Commission; and Paul Sawyer, an organizer of the demonstrations on Fulton Street that had erupted into a scuffle with the police.

Ms. McDonald passed out a press release affirming the solidarity of the entire radical slate of City Council candidates with the BTU7 and demanding that Bachenheimer give them a new lease. In view of the fact that the tenants in question had already split the premises and were seeking to avoid the $52,000 court judgment against them, the proposal for a new lease seemed unrealistic. This impression was confirmed by a young woman named Ruth Rokeach, the union's press person, who said that the radical candidates had never discussed the idea of a lease renewal with BTU7, which was doing its best at this point to become invisible.

After a few remarks by a speaker whom I recognized as a young woman who had been arrested some weeks before for having evaded several traffic warrants, I noticed Mike Delacour, one of the organizers of the effort to take Peoples' Park away from the university. Mike seemed rather nervous, his eyes darting back and forth between me and the band. He said life in the BTU7 houses was pretty bad because there was no social outlet, that tenants were all sort of ingrown, and noncooperating, whereas in the college dorms there was the cafeteria and the places to socialize. Finally he took off, saying he had a couple of classes on campus.

Still the sheriffs hadn't shown, and the crowd was getting restless. The speeches went on, filled with buzz words such as "solidarity," "organization," "fight," "struggle," "community," "money-hungry landlords," and "zap." The tempo picked up with the arrival of a new yellow Volkswagen convertible piloted by a very tan young woman in a sheepskin vest, blue slacks and a short French haircut. The VW passengers moved into the crowd, which cheered when one of them, a young man named Steve, delivered an attack on capitalism.

Then a great gasp of pleasure ran through the crowd at the sight of a train of police cars rounding the corner.

"There they come."

The Channel Five camera crew ran over to start filming the confrontation. The red-arm-banded demonstration leaders lined everybody up and formed a long elliptical circle that marched in front of the houses clapping and chanting, "We've been ousted—That's all right—Organize to fight." The police moved in, and one heavy-set black deputy sheriff formally notified the crowd that the tenants were hereby formally evicted from the premises.

Then, surprisingly, Bachenheimer appeared, manipulating his crutches rapidly, accompanying the police into every building. The crowd seemed a little daunted by the fact that he had shown up but recovered its composure and began to boo when Bachenheimer reappeared out of the first house. By this time one city official in the crowd was screaming "pig, pig, pig", the yellow Volkswagen woman was shouting "mercenaries" at the police, and another speaker on the platform was shouting, "It's not just

Bachenheimer, it's bigger than him." At which the crowd chanted "No rent for rats—no rent for rats." A young woman wearing a white hard hat announced over the microphone, "We'll pay his fines in monopoly money," and her companion, a man in an orange sweatshirt, declared that Bachenheimer was connected with the California Board of Realtors and the Oakland Leamington Hotel, which in his opinion was a CIA front because its owner is a man who operated an airline ferrying supplies into Vietnam. The orange sweatshirt then declared that in a few weeks Saigon would fall, a message that brought the loudest cheers of the day.

Within the hour, the crowd had grown to 150, and the city official was still shouting: "strikebreakers," "union busters," "scabs," "rat patrol." But since the crowd was giving no sign of taking on the police or the police moving to arrest anybody, Channel Five picked up its things and drove away.

A few minutes later the crowd was marching towards Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley's main commercial street, with the woman from the yellow Volkswagen leading the parade. At the bank building where Bachenheimer had his office, guards had just lowered an iron screen over the front entrance and several Berkeley policemen were standing on the corner. All but one of them had beards and long sideburns. Turrits, the Model Cities official, put away his saxophone and donned an orange hard hat, apparently to ward off the blows of a police baton. The demonstrators grabbed the wire screen and rattled it for a minute or two, then there were more speeches and somebody threw at least $52,100 in monopoly money into the air. When somebody thought he spied Bachenheimer peering out of a fifth-story window, the chants began.

"Jump, Dick, jump."

"No rent for rats."

Orange sweatshirt promised over the portable PA system that "We'll see that nobody moves into the Bachenheimer houses. We need help to boycott. We need anti-eviction brigades. We can harass Bachenheimer through the city agencies. We've got the housing agency looking into the code violations."

"Jump, Dick, jump. Your office is your prison!" The crowd repeated it one more time then began to walk back to the Hearst Street houses where several black employees of the Campbell Security Agency were padlocking the doors.

Steve of the yellow Volkswagen jumped up on the Campbell truck: "These people are hired mercenaries. They're scabbing just because it's their job."

The last of the invective was supplied by a group of children, about seven or eight years old. One white child took the microphone and

shouted at a nonexistent Bachenheimer inside the housing, telling him to come out.

A black child then took over. "Bachenheimer, you're a motherfucker," she shouted. Some of the bystanders smiled at her spirit.

Steve corrected her, "No! He's an unfucker."

The child resumed, "Bachenheimer, you're a cocksucker."

At this several people remonstrated saying this was bad language. The yellow Volkswagen girl was embracing and stroking a female companion. Steve hugged some other people, exulting, joyful. Then the yellow Volkswagen people drove off, and the demonstration was over, slightly past noon, on a hot day in April.

In view of the fact that the members of the BTU had occupied the Hearst Street houses for almost five years, I was curious to see what the places looked like inside, especially since the Berkeley Housing Advisory and Appeals Board had said that the tenants maintained the places in neat, clean and reasonably attractive manner. Since the BTU7 public relations person had refused to escort us through on the day of the eviction demonstration, I called Bachenheimer and asked him for permission to go through the properties. He agreed, and said he'd like to go with me. The following are the notes I made on the condition of the interior of the house at 2027 Hearst:

> Electrical fixtures had been ripped off, pipes cut. Closets up and downstairs filled with refuse, old clothes, newspapers, trash, garbage. Upstairs john was clogged with feces and the water had subsequently been turned off. Fireplace overflowing with ashes of burned paper. Upstairs bathroom linoleum ripped off the floor showing bare boards. This accounts for water overflow coming through the ceiling down stairs. In the downstairs sink, the yolk of a raw egg. Poster on the wall; "Free Ruchell Magee: it's right to rebel." On the wall a reproduction of a landscape by Martin Johnson Head of Rio de Janeiro Bay, with "Smash Heterosexism" scrawled across it. Found one book; paperback of Ellen Peck's "How to Get a Teenage Boy and What to do With Him When You've Got Him."

House at 2026 Delaware:

> Backyard, which had been a parking lot, full of junk plus a platform of what had once been a geodesic dome house, used by squatters. A dismantled chicken coop and things that looked like homemade compost receivers, which had no garbage in them: they were about the only places where I didn't see garbage. A huge pile of fresh coffee grounds spilled on the floor. In the kitchen I saw uniform collections of piles and bags of refuse—beer cans, garbage, papers, etc. Weeks of

> garbage, months and years of old clothes being packed in closets. Back yard buried under junk. Trees and bushes had not been pruned. Bachenheimer points to the stump of an avocado tree that had been cut down—it was used for firewood.

I talked to some of the neighbors including one Mrs. H. T. who occupied an apartment building on Delaware Street whose backyard adjoins one of the Hearst Street houses. She didn't want to be quoted by name because she feared "reprisals." Asked to comment on the union's charge that Bachenheimer was ruining the neighborhood by neglecting his houses, she laughed.

"It was the tenants that created the rats around here, piling up their garbage," she said.

> They really had a thing for garbage. When the garbage collectors at the University of California went on strike, the tenants stole my garbage and dumped it on the campus. The next thing I knew a campus police sergeant called me up and said I did it, and I had better get ready to go to the police station. I said what do you mean? The sergeant said they had sifted through the garbage and found letters with my address on them, things like that, so I'd better get my clothes on and get ready to be arrested. I said you're joking.

H. T. said she had tapes of the "infernal racket" that went on in the tenants' houses and yards, some of it emanating from the chickens and animals next door. "Then there were the nude parties out back, with children. Nobody knew who their mommas and papas were. I haven't anything against nude parties, but not in Berkeley. They ran one of their trucks into our building, and the police didn't come for three hours. When there were too many people in the houses, they used to climb over on our roof, and sleep there, and down in the laundry room."

If anybody complained about conditions, Mrs. H. T. said, "these people could be mean and vindictive. They never seemed to run out of filthy tricks to play on people. I got so desperate once that I was thinking of carrying some dead rats down to the health department.

"It used to be a good neighborhood once, here and on Francisco Street where I used to live. I don't mean we were all angels either. We used to go over to Live Oak Park and pommel the Commies with tomatoes, but at least we didn't hurt anybody."

The tenants were out, but they had promised to harass Bachenheimer. Agents showing customers houses owned by Premium Realty were picketed, and prospective renters were subjected to vague threats of retaliation if they moved in.

Some of the displaced tenants had moved into the Parker Street house that Bachenheimer had lost because of his inability to keep up payments. They were ready for Bachenheimer anytime he appeared on the street to look at his property next door.

When Bachenheimer visited Parker with an insurance adjuster, they drove in the adjuster's car, so that he could get in and out of the area before a crowd formed. Bachenheimer found that the private security guards he had hired were unable to protect his houses from being vandalized. He also discovered he had merely exchanged one set of tenants for another—the unknowns who broke in and used the houses as crash pads. It did little good to board up the houses. The plywood would be ripped off almost as soon as the carpenters had left.

The police were of little help. On one occasion, a guard reported to the police he had located a crasher in the Parker Street house. When the patrolman arrived, he took one look at a crowd of tenants' union people and their sympathizers and declined to make an arrest.

A fair idea about Bachenheimer's predicament may be gained from his experience with one of his vandalized houses.

> One late afternoon I found somebody sleeping there and I woke him up. There were three mattresses and one sleeping bag on the floor. I warned the person I would have him arrested, because he had broken into the house. But a few days later, I hear that people are still in there. I got excited, uptight, this isn't good for my blood pressure, and I drove to the back of the lot and walked to the window. Staring me in the face was a bare ass, somebody screwing a girl on the mattress. I called the police but nothing happened. A few days later a broker told me a door had been stolen, and that there were people in the cottage out in back of the house. So I got a workman and we went in and cleaned everything out. At least four people were living there. One gal had a whole closetful of clothes. Dead birds and flowers. Back packs, mattress covers, a broken guitar, a baby carriage with kittens in it. I told the workman to take the stuff and lock it in a building. Then I came back and typed up a list giving my telephone number to call if they wanted to collect their things. I went home, didn't tell my wife, she was already upset enough about what was going on. Then one night in May the police department calls and asks me if I knew my cottage had burned down. The officer said it was arson.

Throughout my following of the Bachenheimer affair I had made several efforts to reach spokesmen for the BTU7 and their attorneys, but after my first meeting with Ms. Rokeach, on eviction day, I never saw her

again. On two different occasions she failed to show up for appointments. The BTU7 union attorneys were even harder to locate, and I was not to see them until my last and final encounter with BTU7 on a Sunday afternoon in June 1975.

Bachenheimer called and asked if I would be interested in going with him when he showed his house on Parker Street to two Vietnamese. When I arrived I was introduced to Mai Nguyen, a slight, dark-eyed, and pretty young woman who was the secretary at a local church, and a tall, thin, gloomy-looking Vietnamese man whose first name is Vi. The fourth member of the party was Alan Kent, an unemployed Vietnamese war veteran who had been helping relocate Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees. Kent, a handsome, tough-looking individual, was wearing a white linen golf cap.

Bachenheimer had offered the house free of rent to the Vietnamese just to have somebody occupying the place. While the Vietnamese were looking through the house, Kent offered numerous observations about Berkeley, including the opinion that it is a political Tijuana for radicals who want to live out their fantasies. He reported that a few days before, when he brought some Cambodians over to see the house, they saw a big Viet Cong flag painted on the street, and they were terrified. He said they have not made the necessary distinctions between American radical sympathizers of the Viet Cong and the VC themselves. They had seen babies torn apart by the Khmer Rouge and they figured after seeing the flag they would be tortured and harassed here.

While Bachenheimer was explaining the terms on which he would let the Vietnamese have the house, a crowd was gathering outside. A bearded man and a young woman in a tank top, nipples showing, began to yell, "Hey Dick, haven't seen you in a while." Then a small black child threw a rock on the porch, and some cherry bombs exploded. Bachenheimer explained that this would quiet down if the Vietnamese moved in.

Mai asked most of the questions. Her idea was that several people could move in and between them they could clean things up, a formidable job in view of the fact that several windows were broken, clothes were strewn over the floors, the refrigerator and stove were encrusted with filth inside and out, and the backyard was piled high with a ten-foot pyramid of junk.

As we moved out of the house, the girl in the tank top rushed up to us and in a high-pitched voice, choking slightly, and speaking in a slightly slurred manner, she turned to Mai and Vi and said, "Are you planning to rent? If you are you will be sorry you moved into this neighborhood."

Vi answered in flawless English. "It is none of your business what our plans are, and I don't like to be told by anybody what I must do."

Tank Top: "It's my business who comes here because I live here. I have plenty of right to tell who is going to live in my neighborhood. You'll be sorry if you move here." She turned. "See that sign across the street?"

She was pointing to a huge banner draped across the front of a house that said: "Parker Street Neighbors Support Boycott of 2233 and 2235 Parker Avenue."

Vi replied that it was none of Tank Top's business where he decided to live.

Tank Top turned furiously on Bachenheimer. "Get the hell off my street, get the hell out of my neighborhood, you fucking pig."

"Don't interfere with our lives," Mai said.

Tank Top went away but the skirmish had only begun.

As we walked past the house which Bachenheimer lost, now owned by some of the Tenants' Union people, who bought it with withheld rents, seven or eight of them came trickling out, Tank Top among them. They told the Vietnamese to stay out, and Vi and Mai reacted as they had before. Finally one of the crowd said something about punching somebody out.

Bachenheimer, who until now had let the Vietnamese handle the situation, reddened. "You want to make something of it?" He was flaming mad, and I expected that he would give a good account of himself, despite the crutch. His ally, Kent, dared them to do something rough.

One of his tenants, a tall blonde had a hedge clipper in his hand. Intimating that he would not be averse to some heavy action, he said to Bachenheimer, "This is a closed neighborhood and your Vietnamese friends had better stay out."

I asked my first question, "What is a closed neighborhood?"

"It's a neighborhood where people are close and work together," the blond answered.

"What do you mean when you say these people will be sorry if they move in?"

The blond informed me that "they will be sorry if they rent from Bachenheimer because he's a fucking landlord, the worst slumlord in Berkeley. We're just giving them advice."

"I don't need your advice," said Vi.

"We're perfectly capable of making up our own minds," said Mai, "and if Bachenheimer ever tried to rip me off I can handle the situation."

A man stepped up behind Bachenheimer and shouted, "You fucking pig, get the hell out of here." Tank Top picked up the refrain. "One more fucking word from your stupid mouth, Bachenheimer and . . ."

Bachenheimer turned to me and pointed out two men in the crowd around us. "Here's David Shagam and Tom McHugh, the lawyers who

lost their case for them." Neither Shagam nor McHugh had been talking as I took notes.

By this time whistles were blowing all over the block, and more people were converging.

Shagam broke his silence. "I'll give you a list of Bachenheimer's investors. Talk to some of his tenants, they'll tell you what he is."

Vi: "You have a different point of view, that's your privilege."

Shagam: "It's not just your business, it's the whole neighborhood's business. People have to work together."

Vi: "I don't want any help."

Tank Top: "We don't want you to get ripped-off."

Mai: "We're intelligent enough to take care of ourselves."

Unidentified teenager to Bachenheimer: "I don't want to see your ugly face here again, you fucking pig."

The Blond: "This guy leaves a snail's trail all over the community. We're not trying to threaten you. This is a closed nighborhood."

My camera and notebook seemed to slow things down a bit, and shortly after we walked off the block.

The final round of this particular battle on Parker Street took place on Saturday, the next weekend, when Kent accompanied a group of Vietnamese to the vacant house on Parker Street. They spent the afternoon fixing up the garden, cutting weeds, and getting rid of the garbage. Some neighbors from the other end of the block, not tenants' union people, came over to say they were glad to see somebody cleaning up. Before long, however, a platoon of tenants' union people came over and taunted the Vietnamese. Kent lost his cool, shoved one of them and was hit on the head with a camera. The blond then started to mix it up with Kent and the police were called.

At 7:00 A.M. that Sunday morning the police called Bachenheimer to tell him that all the windows in the house the Vietnamese had wanted to move into had been broken. Somebody down the block had heard the tinkling, which went on for half an hour, but by the time he went up to investigate, the job had been finished.

7 A Journal of the Mid-Seventies

Inside Westbrae. "If you're looking for a small town in Berkeley, it's right here," Louis Simondi says from behind the counter of his delicatessen on Gilman Street. "We don't pay any attention to South Berkeley or East Berkeley or West Berkeley."

Simondi is talking about the neighborhood of Westbrae, sandwiched between the middle-class Thousand Oaks area in the hills to the East and a nondescript section of San Pablo Avenue lined with automobile and motorcycle dealers, bars, motels, fast food restaurants, and liquor stores illuminated by miles of neon signs. He is describing a village within a city: the remnants of an old Italian-American community that used to rule the roost in Westbrae, but which is now a dwindling enclave of old-timers surrounded by newcomers—blacks, students, young white families, and single people.

Even if the old Westbrae is shrinking, Simondi thinks, it is still a neighborhood. An old ruddy-faced woman in a worn polo coat and galoshes comes in. She is one of Simondi's regular customers.

"What'll it be today, Mrs. Brewer," Simondi asks.

"Stew tonight, Louis, what'll I get for stew?"

Simondi's shelves are filled with old-fashioned Neapolitan delicacies and modern processed foods: Musso's Gourmet cookies, Progresso soups, fresh oregano at 30 cents a bag, dried mushrooms, Ruffino Chianti. Some days a hand-painted sign in the window says "Rabbits fresh killed." Also available is fresh poultry and cheese and salami sandwiches to go. Reading material includes a painted platter on the wall which proclaims that "Wives who cook and do the dishes should be granted these three

wishes—a grateful mate, a well-kissed cheek, a Louie's dinner every week." A cartoon announces that no credit is available. Simondi and other merchants nearby do not require identification with checks. They know most of their customers by sight.

Like Simondi, Ivo Mori, the owner of the Old Corner Liquor Store on Gilman, greets his customers by name. Some of them have been coming in since Mori's father started the business 38 years ago. If they move out of the area they still come back, sometimes with their children and grandchildren. Salted in amongst his long-time customers are some new faces that have become familiar, although Mori is not sure who they are and they strike him as colder, less responsive. "They don't trust you if you're too friendly," he says.

Another businessman keenly aware of change is John Lasagna, who operates the block-long Westbrae nursery. Things are moving too fast, he says, it's against the law of nature. When Lasagna, Simondi and Mori were in business 30 years ago, Westbrae had three barbers, three liquor stores, three groceries, a five and ten cent store, a drugstore and a jeweler. "Everything you needed," Lasagna says. Now people have to go elsewhere for most of their services. "Something else has happened," he adds. "Even 15 years ago you never knew what it was like to lock up. Now I have to have a barbed wire fence around the nursery, like it was a concentration camp. We who are supposed to be free are in the camps and the rest of them are out stealing."

The sense of being beleaguered in their own neighborhood comes through in many conversations.

John Cantisani owns a shoe repair shop which is the oldest business in Westbrae. He is a dark-complexioned, moustached man in his sixties who wears a stained apron over a baggy work shirt and works along at three ancient leatherworking machines from 5:30 A.M. to 5:30 P.M. "trying to make ends meet and be a good citizen." He has no doubts that the neighborhood is going to pot, an opinion which carries some weight because Cantisani is considered the unofficial mayor of Westbrae and keeps a close eye on what goes on in the street. His watchfulness didn't prevent somebody from breaking through the roof of his place, stealing $15.00 from the cash register and then breaking down a door to get into Mori's liquor store where he took $400. Cantisani still keeps a newspaper clipping that tells the story. In a lively Italian accent, embellished with pointing, shrugs, fist pounding and a few winks, he says he has seen 29 years of change and things get worse all the time. He puts his hand in front of his face, peeking through his fingers. "We didn't even have to lock the door before, now somebody rings a doorbell and you go to open it with a pipe in your hands." He is looking forward to retiring and spending more time

with his family. "Happiness and everything comes from the family, but now-a-days there's no discipline and no happiness either."

He hammers a heel into place.

> The other races aren't friendly at all. It's just he owes me this and that's it, no hello, no nothin'. I tell you, one day I was standing talking with Ivo Mori next door, and a Negro man passes by, so I say 'Hi, how are you this evening?' like I always do everybody, and he just walked by like this. He turned his nose up and closes his eyes. I say, "What's a matter? Why don't you say hello?' and do you know what he said to me. I am sorry to say this in front of you. He said, 'Fuck you.' I'll never forget what he told me. I was trying to be nice, regardless of what color he was. Now I won't even bother. Why should I? If they pass by the shop I just stand there and mind my own business.

Many of the old Westbrae families are related by marriage. Sometimes they work in each others' family businesses. Ivo Mori's sister married Nick Lasagna, and Louis Simondi's brother-in-law owns Westbrae Liquors across the street from his delicatessen. Mori's nephew, Carl Lasagna, also John Lasagna's nephew, works in Mori's Liquor Store part time. The younger Italian-Americans haven't lost any of their family or ethnic loyalties, but they are more optimistic about the future of the neighborhood. Carl Lasagna, a carpenter in his twenties, says that "these people—my dad, Mr. Mori, Mr. Olivero—are what made Berkeley. They'll never leave. Sure, they went through some bad feelings when guys with long hair started coming in and the other races moved into the neighborhood, but basically they're very flexible. They care about their home and their families. Politics and hippies, none of that really bothers them."

One person who has different opinions is Mrs. Rena Jacuzzi, who has lived more than 50 years a block away from Simondi's delicatessen in a pink stucco house with wrought-iron trim, a two-car garage and tailored rose bushes on the front lawn. The family, founders of the Jacuzzi Whirlpool Bath Corporation, also operated a successful West Berkeley business. Mrs. Jacuzzi lives alone, her children having moved away. Her home has wall-to-wall carpeting, old-fashioned chairs upholstered in brocade, and a gilt chandelier hanging in the living room. On the coffee table is a large framed picture of her granddaughter in her Communion dress. In the dim light, Mrs. Jacuzzi recalls the neighborhood many years ago: "We were all very happy here. Now I feel sorry. We don't have many merchants anymore and BART blinds the streets so the old people gotta walk for blocks with their little carts to shop." She is referring to the tracks of the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) system which form a barrier

across several of Westbrae's streets. She comments sadly on the fact that Curtis Street is filled now with rowdy children. Nevertheless, Mrs. Jacuzzi intends to stay. "To me, this is my home. We still have a nice colony here, and most of the neighbors are nice families."

Although Westbrae businesses are robbed occasionally, the neighborhood is apparently a safe place to raise vegetables. In the front yard of Fred Olivero, an 84-year-old man who has lived in Berkeley about as long as Rena Jacuzzi, are rows and rows of neatly planted tomatoes, squash, celery, carrots, cucumbers and lettuce. The harvest is plainly visible over Olivero's white wooden fence. The garden is a crucial factor in Olivero's economic planning, as is the huge increase in taxes on his modest home and the hated BART elevated transit system.

"This old shack was built in 1904, with two-by-three boards 30 inches apart," Olivero says. "In 1940 I paid $1,900 for the place. Now they want to assess it for $33,000." If his house is assessed at that figure, Berkeley's high tax rate, the taxes would consume the lion's share of Olivero's $113 a month income. As an example of why his taxes ought to be lowered instead of raised, he says that one day last winter he had to go out in the pouring rain to get some milk when his blind son had the flu. Not only was the sidewalk under water, but in order to circumnavigate the BART blockade, he had to walk almost a mile to the store. "And now they wanta raise property taxes on this street. Jesus Christamighty! I didn't even vote for BART."

Olivero is wearing some worn khaki pants with suspenders and an old plaid woolen shirt. Although he is hard of hearing and has, at least temporarily, no discernible teeth, he has a vigorous shock of snow-white hair and a remarkable memory for dates, names, places and events. In his neatly arranged living room there are mementoes from the old country and of old Berkeley, family pictures in frames made by his wife who died two years ago, hand-made anti-macassars on overstuffed chairs, and an ancient bulky radio. At the moment the inhabitant of this museum is sitting at the kitchen table working on part of the Olivero survival plan, a diagram of Nielson and Curtis Streets and the BART tracks that turned them into dead ends. When finished, the drawing will be forwarded to the county assessor as part of a plea to reduce his taxes.

His neighbors were also done in by BART, Oliver says.

> This poor colored guy who used to live next door, he had his apartment up for rent for three months and it's still up for rent. And across the street a lady couldn't sell her house. She asked what it was assessed for, $24,000, and she only got $14,000, and her house is better than this because she's got a cottage in the back yard. When I fixed this house up

in 1940 I paid $69.00 in taxes. Now they want $750. They're robbing the people over 65. Other people can strike for more money. What the hell am I gonna strike for?

Olivero is not aware that there are hundreds of houses in Berkeley's affluent hills section for which the asking and getting price is as much as two times the assessed valuation. He also doesn't know that many of these expensive residences are deriving from two to five times his monthly income from the rental of illegal and unregistered apartments. He is convinced, however, that the poor everywhere are getting the short end of the stick.

Over the years Olivero accumulated enough to pay for his house and be self-supporting, but now he finds himself in somewhat the same position his farming parents were in more than 70 years ago. The difference between making it on his $113 a month social security and going under and losing everything is in the garden.

"Do you think I spend one cent on produce or bread or anything?" he asks. "No sir." He opens a freezer where there are cardboard boxes labelled "Berkshire pantyhose," in which there are rows of tiny, homemade ravioli. "And pasta. You want to see how I make my own pasta?" He takes a large noodle-maker from a box near the freezer. "For small noodles, spaghetti, you put it in here. Big noodles, they go in here. And from squash I made pies. One time I hadda squash so big I made 19 pies."

He goes into the living room to get a cigarette, then walks slowly downstairs into a small basement where there are shelves and shelves of home-canned tomatoes, squash, peppers, antipasto, and carrots. Proudly he pulls down an enormous zucchini squash, almost three feet long. This son of an Italian *paisano* is laughing and his eyes are shining.

To the young people, whether they are new arrivals or relatives of the old "landmark" families, Westbrae is infinitely more desirable than any other part of the city. If the area has lost much of its charm, as the older residents think, it is still better than most places. Preoccupied with finding out about their neighbors and schools and getting around, the conversations of the younger people have an up-to-date feeling about them. In some ways it is difficult to tell who are the real experts on Westbrae now, the people who have lived here for half a century or more but who have withdrawn through disappointment or age, or the recent arrivals who are heavily involved in the present through children and friends. Age, rather than family background seems to determine whether or not somebody sees the neighborhood going up or going down. The younger generation of Italian-Americans very often share the optimism of the newcomers about

how things are going. Louis Lasagna, the nursery owner, and his son speak of what's happening in the same vein as the young couples and students moving in. The neighborhood, Lasagna says, has "turned out to be quite a melting pot, and the people in this area of the best quality, from Mexican to black to European to whaddyacallit—Oriental." He adds that the houses "have been improved by the foreign people and the black people."

Compared to the section of Berkeley around lower University Avenue (the main east-west thoroughfare in Berkeley), Peggy and John Barnham think that Westbrae is just about right. Even before the prostitutes began to patrol the corners of their old University Avenue neighborhood it was a "pretty hairy place, people getting ripped-off right and left. There was no sense of community at all, it was just survival," Peggy remarks. In Westbrae the Barnhams rent a green stucco house with a living room, dining room, a two-room kitchen, and one-and-a-half bedrooms for $175 a month, well within what they can afford to pay on their combined salaries. Peggy knows the people who live on either side of her. "The neighborhood is friendly, but you can only go so far—there is a trusting 'Hi, neighbor' sort of thing as long as you don't get too personal."

Cindy Bleadow, an 18-year old who has been feeding the Barnham's child Toby some yogurt, looks up in agreement. "People are so friendly here, more advanced. We came to Berkeley broke, and Peggy fed us for awhile." Now that her husband has a job as a drafting engineer at the Berkeley Pump Works, Cindy is thinking about staying in Westbrae and having children, if they can buy a house. Meanwhile they are quite satisfied with their three-room cottage in back of the Barnham's, which they rent for $150 a month.

Peggy's liking for Westbrae, which she thinks is a good place to raise children, does not extend to Berkeley proper. She will not send her son to Berkeley public schools but to a church school. "I'm not a religious fanatic, but Berkeley is full of weird people, which I suppose is true of any university town." She went through a brief stage as a hippie herself. "I still look like it," she says, smiling, looking down at her bell bottom pants and bare feet. "When I first came out here at age 17, it was free dope, beads, bells, bangles, the whole bit, and now I'm a conservative."

She attributes the change to her interest in Christianity. "Berkeley is a magnet for every kind of cosmic consciousness movement, of all kinds of religions. Christianity was a relief for me, I was tired of the whole thing—the protests, the war, the Sather Gate pushing and shoving, almost before it started. Now we're really middle class, I mean we drive a middle-class car, have middle-class jobs. We're as middle class as you can get. And if it came down to whether I had to die for my country, I would."

Feeling settled, as the Barnhams do, or owning a house in Westbrae, not only moderates political views, but also triggers all sorts of creative impulses directed at neighborhood beautification. William and Elizabeth Council, who own a three-level house on Neilson Street, think it is high time something should be done about the environmental havoc caused by BART. William, a heavy, balding black man who heads the Office of Economic Opportunity in Solano County, would like to have a children's mini-park, with artificial turf, built under the BART structure. At present the area is planted with ivy ground cover that is trampled into mud during the rainy season by people going to the laundromat. A monument which everybody agrees is an unmitigated eyesore is a stark, pebbled BART wall paint-sprayed with the huge message that "Michelle Loves Benny Forever I Am Your Woman and You Are My Man."

Balancing the inelegant graffiti on the BART wall is the work of Sharon Wheat, a muralist who had enlivened Neilson Street with her work done in her spare time when she isn't weaving—an occupation which begins as early as four a.m. and continues with a few breaks until midnight. Ms. Wheat, a tall fair-skinned woman with a good-natured countenance, has painted the whole side of her stucco house with a scene of plump bluebirds flying through a rainbow, over clouds and sunflowers. Just to be sure her tenants who live in an adjacent house across a lot populated by ducks and rabbits, approved, Ms. Wheat submitted three "blueprints" of different designs before she began. The tenants made the final selection.

A short distance away Alison and her friend Don, who have bought a house on Cornell Street, are trying to interest their neighbors in a tree-planting project. They have put in three trees on their own property to get started. Alison, a 27-year-old long-haired brunette, has on the same type of clothes—blue jeans, a bulky white sweater, desert boots—she wears when she gardens three days a week for families in the hills. She says that if the city gets an order for 10 trees, it will pay one half the cost and do the planting. She has already sold four homeowners on the idea and she has a fifth prospect in mind—a Japanese family which has the most elaborate home on the block. While she explains her plan a bearded man comes up and asks her to take a look at the front yard he has just cleared across the street.

Residents of other Westbrae streets will offer instances of neighborly cooperation. When Jeffrey Litman, a 26-year-old school teacher, was moving into his house and struggling with a heavy desk, several people across the street not only helped with the desk, but also moved in the rest of the furniture as well.

While Westbrae people are generally pleased with their own community, they are not satisfied with the way the city is being run. Litman finds

Berkeley politics "really disgusting because they don't accomplish anything. Everyone wants to talk and no one wants to listen. I think Berkeley is going through an adolescent stage." Ms. Willa Parrot, the wife of the city ombudsman, says the city made a "groping effort to achieve progressive government and blew it." Both the old-timers and the newcomers feel that taxes are exorbitant and that neighborhoods like Westbrae get less attention from the city than the more pretentious residential areas. The pot holes in the streets are a symbol of such neglect.

Al Muldrow, a black man who is Berkeley's parking supervisor and has lived on Neilson Street for more than a dozen years, elaborated on the theme that some people get better treatment than others at the hands of city government. "One thing that upsets me most is that the projects that are supposed to be helping the poor aren't reaching them," he says. "I know from my own observation poor people are not utilizing the clinics because they've never heard of them, while people from the hills go to them free."

Miyako Uchida, the wife of a comptroller of a dress business, is dismayed by the lack of discipline in the Berkeley public schools. "My first three girls went through the public schools without all this hassling—before the alternative schools and the racial tensions. Now children in class seem to be always frothing and foaming, talking instead of paying attention."

Muldrow explains why he is sending his three children to Catholic schools. "The public schools were too permissive. The lower grades were fine, but at Martin Luther King Junior High the teachers didn't seem to have any control over the kids." Muldrow isn't sure why. It might have been because the teachers, particularly white teachers, were responding to political pressures to go easy on minority children, or "maybe the teachers were just afraid of the kids." His daughter Karen, 16, agrees that Catholic schools are "stricter" but she enjoys it. The three Muldrow children have a musical group—guitar, violin, and piano—and they play occasionally for church affairs.

"That's another nice thing about this neighborhood", Muldrow says, bouncing his 10-month old granddaughter on his knee. "The kids can practice in the basement and nobody complains."

Boschetti's Mob. When Rick Boschetti's parents moved to Kains Street in the 1940s, most of the flatlands neighborhood was composed of lower middle-class families—white, black and Asian—who owned their homes. In the past few years, the population has changed, Rick thinks. Some of the older families are moving out and renting to "transient types" including unmarried couples—which bothers Rick's parents and some of the

black families who are concerned that they might be a bad influence on their children. It doesn't matter to Rick, who is graduating from the University, and will be leaving it all behind. But he does remember his growing up on Kains Street with a great deal of pleasure.

"I knew everybody, everybody's mother, even the parents who didn't have kids," he said.

People did things for each other. If somebody needed an errand done, and wasn't feeling well, somebody would go to the store for her. People weren't afraid to talk to each other. There was a Japanese family, the Tanakas, who lived a couple of blocks away, and Mr. Tanaka would take a whole bunch of us up to Garfield Junior High almost every evening in the summer to play ball. There were two white brothers, the Temples, who lived across the street, in the gang, and there were two Chicano brothers, the Rubios down the street from them. Some Chinese fellows used to come up from San Pablo Avenue to play, and there were two black brothers who lived across from the Tanakas. We had a real pack, did a lot together. Mr. Tanaka worked in a grocery store and we'd all pile into the big truck he owned. He liked kids. He was a real baseball nut, playing all the time. He'd take us different places, and Mr. Temple would come along and play ball too. Sometimes we'd go on picnics, and Mrs. Tanaka would fix meals for us.

We went fishing quite a bit, but fishing off the pier was sort of old hat, so we'd go on the rocks and fish. You didn't need a license. We got our fishing equipment by drinking coke all summer. We saved the bottles and collected enough money to buy rods, and also got enough materials to build a ping pong table. We made it out of plywood and two-by-fours. Then for like months running, every day and night, all we did was play ping pong in the Tanakas basement. That was our clubhouse. Even Mrs. Tanaka would come down. As a matter of fact Mrs. Tanaka was a helluva ping pong player. We didn't challenge any outsiders; we were a pretty close-knit group. The Tanakas brought down chips and soft drinks. They ran a perennial snack bar.

I never talked to Mr. Tanaka much about politics, but I know the family had been relocated during World War II. I always knew him as somebody who was into sports—baseball and football. He coached summer leagues. The Japanese had a lot of sports organizations going. I tried to get into a Japanese League once by saying my grandmother was Japanese, but it didn't work. We did a lot of swimming too. We'd take the bus up to the Albany High School pool. We weren't rowdy. We'd stay away from the other guys in the pool. We did a little bit of hellraising, but we never hurt anybody. I think the worst thing we ever

did as a group was around Christmas time. We'd go around stealing Christmas light bulbs off outdoor trees and take them down to the Temple's basement and shoot them with BB gun pellets. Well, Mr. Tanaka found out about the BB guns and our rifle range and he told us to get rid of the guns. That's when we lost our desire to steal light bulbs. After that we started feeling guilty about it. As a matter of fact, now that I think about it, I feel really bad, but at the time it was a lot of fun.

Rick doesn't remember having any trouble with the police.

There wasn't any neighborhood cop. But my brother, who is 16 years older than I, knew a Berkeley cop named Officer Radcliffe. When my brother and some of his friends organized a car club called the Road Runners, Office Radcliffe would come around. He would set up rules and regulations, about what streets to drive on, rules for challenging other clubs to drag races and where they should meet. They wouldn't drag in the streets: I think they went somewhere behind the race tracks in Albany. They'd make their own track. Occasionally they'd get into trouble, but nobody ever got hurt. They didn't challenge other clubs to race. What they did do was build engines and challenge other clubs to inspections. Matter of fact my brother got a trophy for having the neatest car in the club.

I went to elementary school at Franklin from about 1957 to 1962. It was about 98 percent blacks, with about as many whites as there are Asians and Chicanos. You had to be cool, you wore Continental pants and a button down shirt with a tie and pointed shoes. You never wore white socks. I wasn't aware I was any different from the blacks. I don't think they knew I was white. It was something else at Columbus. We hated to go down there. The Franklin Elementary baseball team would play them and if we beat them we'd run like hell because we knew we'd get our asses kicked otherwise.

Going to Franklin was something you did. I liked most of the teachers all right. We didn't have many assemblies. Now I talk to my girl friend who comes from the Claremont district, and went to John Muir. She tells me about all the plays and assemblies they had up there and I feel a little angry because we never had those things. It seemed like the only time we had the assembly was when it rained, and we had to stay in the auditorium and play things like "London Bridge Is Falling Down."

This gang started to disintegrate when we became aware of girls. I remember going to Live Oak Park where they had dancing on Friday nights, and seeing kids dancing together, mainly from the hills, and watching people make out. It shocked the hell out of me. I know that

one of my Asian friends had quite an identity crisis for a while when he started meeting some of the upper middle class Asian girls.

High school was a cultural shock.

Some of the new teachers were pretty permissive, and you did better if you thought their way. One of my history teachers was pretty radically minded; she wore T-shirts to school, and if you wanted to get a good grade you had to repeat more or less what she told you: she was giving me quite a bit of radical literature, although it wouldn't be radical now. I used to write fairly decent papers about my observations but unless I put a radical tint to it she would never give me more than a B. One time we had a 10-page paper to do and I said okay, I'm going to give her just what she wants, something really radical. She gave me a B plus, and at the bottom she wrote, "You're trying Richard, you're trying." Other students had the same experience. Then there was an English teacher who had you sign a contract to read three books. The rest of the time you'd string beads, make mosaics. You never learned a thing about English, but you did learn creative arts and crafts. At the end of the quarter she'd ask you if you had fulfilled your contracts, and you'd say yes, and she'd give you an A for the course.

The one teacher I thought was really good was Mrs. Swisher, an English teacher. She had a more radical slant than the other teachers, but at least she tried to do something constructive. She was the best and strictest teacher I ever had. She tried to make you aware of yourself. Every day we had to keep a journal of what we were thinking, how we felt. She'd help us translate these feelings, understand why we felt the way we did, relate our ideas to politics, things that were happening around us. The way she did things, it didn't seem to be demanding, it felt natural, it felt good to go in and write. She was different from the others.

Most of the kids felt like high school was a stopping off place, like they had to get there and get out. The main tension came when Martin Luther King was killed. I was coming home from a baseball game and I was one of the few white guys on the bus. When we heard a rumor Martin Luther King had been assassinated, Ronnie King, a black kid who was team captain, said "Man I hope that's not true because if it is all hell is going to break loose." Sure enough next day a bunch of students went to downtown Berkeley and broke windows, and some whites got beaten up in Provo Park across from the school. There was a big meeting in the Community Theater, which holds 3,500 people, and it was packed. They had a few reverends from different churches to talk

to the students to calm them down, put the whole thing in perspective, trying to make it more than a day of destruction. This huge group of black students on the right side of the auditorium broke out into the song, "We Shall Overcome." I remember feeling a chill, not a scared chill, but a togetherness chill. I don't think things ever got back to normal after that. Things calmed down, but attitudes changed. The attitudes of blacks I had known didn't change, but with blacks I didn't know very well it wasn't quite so friendly as before.

After the assassination, we had a meeting of the baseball team and decided not to play the next game. Now to show you how ignorant I was about just how the blacks on the team felt, I said maybe we should play the game and show that blacks and whites can play on the same field together. They said no, and I had a hard time understanding it at first but later on I began to. Two weeks later we went to San Leandro to play, and our blacks started saying things like "Man, this is nothing but a white town." They might have joked about that sort of thing before, but now they were serious, and they'd start talking about how real estate agents in San Leandro were trying to keep blacks out, and you really got a sense of what state of mind they were into, on top of the King business. Maybe we were oversensitive. But it seemed like that solid white block of parents in the stands were screaming their heads off not just because it was a baseball game, but because our team was black, from Berkeley and they just wanted to see us get our ass kicked. I'd played in San Leandro before and they had never reacted so much.

I noticed it in football, too. One time we were playing Pacific High and this big offensive tackle, about six foot two and 230 pounds, came up and he said, "You goddam bunch of niggers," and that really freaked me out. I went over and told our coach, who was black, that they were really getting racial. So he called over the team and said don't overreact, do everything on that field to win the game. Later on I scored a touchdown and I walked up to that tackle and said, "Who's a nigger now, white boy?" and he looked at me like I was crazy. At least with Pacific, even though we knew they didn't like us, they had a few Asians and Chicanos. But Alameda High was completely white, so we were really on them when they came to Berkeley to play. I remember listening to our fans in the stands—they wouldn't be just yelling at the game, they would be yelling at the Alameda people on the other side of the stadium. No fights ever broke out, but I know damn well no fans ever stayed long in Berkeley after the game. The visiting team was bussed out of there in a hurry.

There were school dances after football games, but they were very out things. I'd go up and it would be all blacks, maybe 150 in the gym.

People would say, "Damn, I just came to check it out," and they'd leave. None of the hippie whites would come. They would go over to Provo Park and blow their pot, that was their release. Less and less whites were coming to the games by the time I graduated. The school yard was segregated too, not deliberately. There were islands of blacks and whites. Underneath the cafeteria was a large open space. One section would be all black, and the other section practically all whites. It wasn't like you couldn't cross over a line or something, and I didn't feel that these islands were unfriendly to each other. But when the Black Students Union formed, they pushed the idea of self-segregation, and at first they wanted to ban whites from their meetings. This was pretty hard on black kids who'd had lots of white friends. The BSU types would get on them and call them Uncle Toms. I know many black kids started to drift away from their white friends then.

Years later, a lot of the blacks I knew in high school have changed. They've really thrown off their white connections. I have a couple of friends I was really close to all through high school, who were blacks and hung around a lot with whites. One of them, Dimitri, became chairman of the Black Student Union at Santa Clara. I learned from his father that he got married and had a very colorful African wedding. He invited hardly anybody he knew from high school. Like I was very close to him, knew him from second grade. He believes that the whole system is geared toward oppression of blacks, and he says you can't try and solve problems with whites. Blacks have to do it themselves. Only when you get yourself together can you concentrate on getting the races together. I think guys like Dimitri realized in school that many of the radical whites weren't really that concerned—they talked a good show but what the hell. Blacks who couldn't afford it would come to school dressed well and whites who could afford to dress well would come dressed really sloppily. The white kids who could afford college would run it down and end up going to college, whereas the black kids who were trying to make it and improve their situation never got to college. Even I felt it. There were a lot of whites from the hill families who would say how this has got to change, how we need social reform. We'd look at each other, the black kids and I—we'd know damn well their fathers have big incomes and they'd never have a problem in their lives, even if they did drop out, they'd never have a problem. The blacks never had anything to drop out from.

Things haven't always worked out the way we thought they would, though. I've kept up a few contacts with white people up in the hills, and from what I've seen they haven't done much of anything with their lives. They aren't going to school, and they manage to live in an

apartment for $150-$200 a month and drive around in a nice sports car which I couldn't afford the insurance for. Then I look at many of the blacks I went to school with, and wonder whether they're working or they're in school. I think the people who never had it are trying to get somewhere. The whites already had it made.

Bonita Street. Some hippies lived in this block on Bonita Street for a while, throwing frisbees and loud parties that started at midnight, but they wore out themselves and their welcome and disappeared with very few people regretting the departure, least of all Plum Greenberg who used to come to the door in her nightgown and tell them to shut up. Now most of the racket on Bonita, except for the cries of small children in the afternoon, comes from an old sheepdog barking in somebody's backyard. The biggest noise any can remember on this block occurred on Mother's Day 1971 when somebody tried to blow up the downtown Bank of America with a pipe bomb.

Many of the people on the block between Cedar and Vine live in two-story houses painted white, green, blue, pink or brown, with old-fashioned kitchens, shutters on the windows, bathtubs with feet, and an occasional curved ceiling. There are also some old A-frame houses which are supposed to weather earthquakes fairly well. Although a few apartment buildings have begun to appear in these parts, as is happening in other residential areas, their outlines are softened by large trees and architects have camouflaged their facades with things like imitation plaster logs which are supposed to give them a "natural" look. The most prominent building, which has affected people psychologically, is something called the Satellite Senior Home, located just around the corner. The occupants of these sound-proofed apartments pay reasonable rents—$137 a month for a one-bedroom apartment, $95 for a small studio apartment, $112 for a large one. To qualify, people have to have less than $6,900 a year in income besides being over 65.

Satellite has blocked out some peoples' view of the bay. All Joe Garrett, who ran for the city council and lost, can see from his second-story porch is tiers of dark windows, all with the same kind of curtains. The inhabitants of Satellite get a view to the west of the Golden Gate Bridge and the San Francisco skyline, and to the east a clear view of Bonita Street, including a divorcee who waters her plants and sunbathes in the nude and is damned if she'll give it up because she was here before Satellite was. She says that the "thing" (the Satellite building) could have been worse. It could have been six instead of five stories.

Ms. Greenberg, the one who used to holler at the hippies, was instrumental in getting the owners to repaint the building a greyish brown, a

distinct improvement over "a horrible neon white" that, reflecting the sun, made even the trees turn pale. She and another resident visited the architect and told him they didn't want any Holiday Inns next door.

"He hemmed and hawed a bit, but he changed the color," she reported, and now she has an amiable relationship with the architect, who got her some panes of glass, at a discount, for a sliding door she was putting in. The Greenberg family is accustomed to doing good turns as well as asking favors. Swanna, the youngest Greenberg, waters the lawn of 84-year-old Ellen Johnson, the block's oldest inhabitant, for a penny instead of the usual nickel.

The people in Satellite homes say they are getting to know their neighbors. Elizabeth and Howard Hauz, for instance, who "escaped" from Oakland, belong to the Unitarian Church on Cedar and Bonita, and Howard as treasurer signs the checks. The church is a swinging outfit, he says, what with singles encounter groups, naked children running around in the church's nursery school, yoga classes, primal scream sessions, and Saturday night rock musicals. Hauz, who started as a lawyer in Chicago, later became a fund raiser. That experience gave him the ability to persuade people, including the Satellite management, to give away money. As a result, the inhabitants of Satellite have carpets and heat in the hallways and extra guard rails in the bathroom for disabled seniors.

In terms of its inhabitants and housing, this Bonita Street block is neither rich nor poor as Berkeley standards go, but as the years go by and real estate values go up in a seller's market, the people who move in tend to be better off than the people who move out. Most of the residents who are still here after 10 or 15 years couldn't afford to buy their house at today's prices. A beautiful brown shingle house in this choice area—close to the university, the downtown business section and the Shattuck Avenue CO-OP grocery where children can get ice cream cones after dinner—cost $25,000 in 1973. The same house today would bring over three times that much.

The block has other assets not possessed by some other more expensive sections of Berkeley. In contrast to the twisting, narrow roads in the hills area, which are difficult to navigate because of the parked cars around every curve, Bonita is short, lightly traveled except during rush hours, and wide enough to accommodate on-street parking. Even the cars are interesting. Some of the down-at-the-heels Fords, Chevies, and Volkswagens perform double duty as wall posters and art galleries. Behind an old white sedan, labeled "Fat Spotted Porcupine," is a jalopy with a whole library of bumper stickers exhorting the leftists not to lose heart. A few minutes' browsing turns up several "Support the Farm Workers," a few weatherbeaten McGovern stickers, one "Fight Pollution, Buy a

Horse," one "Welcome Home POWS" and one handlettered "Fuck Nixxon." A couple of vans which seem to be in drydock most of the time are murals on wheels, painted in swirling psychedelic blues, purples, scarlets, and oranges.

The people here are not rich, but they have things rich people have, so the homes are burglarized from time to time. Some people take the thefts philosophically. They discover the stereo is missing, call the police, suddenly remember the marijuana plants in the backyard, and pull them up and stuff them into trash cans, temporarily. One young man leaves his front door and his car unlocked, even though he has a tape deck inside, because he says, "there are too many hot tape decks on the market already." When he was burglarized in his previous apartment, before calling the police he hid his grass in the nose of his clarinet.

After having been burgled twice, one man gave up on Berkeley, remodeled his house, and headed for Colorado. Marilynn McGregor, a social worker from New York who remembers Brooklyn Heights as a "lovely place with a lot of graduate students and interesting Syrians," left her windows unlocked just one day and she was burglarized. She was convinced the burglars knew beforehand about the windows. It was some "punk kids" in the vicinity, who like the block because it is not "well-trafficked." But she still prefers Bonita to other places she is familiar with in Berkeley, that she now avoids. Telegraph Avenue, for instance.

"I was walking along and this guy started slapping this woman. I said, 'Stop it.' He didn't. Everybody else was ignoring it." Then she recalls her experience late at night on the corner of University and San Pablo, a main intersection which has off and on been a favorite spot for prostitutes.

> I saw this black guy beating up a white woman. He was a pimp. There were all these people watching, but no one was doing anything. I went over to a gas station attendant who was looking, and I asked him in a low voice, because I didn't want the pimp to hear me, "Did you call the cops?"
>
> He said in a loud voice so everyone could hear, "Cops, what cops?" The black guy came walking over and he said "This is my woman and I can do anything I want with her." I walked over to a car that was getting gas, got in the front seat, locked the door and told the guy to drive me home. I called the cops when I got there, but later they told me they couldn't find anything.

Mary and John N——— were burglarized several months ago for the first time. Mary, a well-groomed woman in her fifties, thinks she knows who the culprits are—three children. They were seen by the neighbors who didn't realize at the time what the boys were doing. They used a

razor to cut away the screen on the back door, and kicked open the back door, breaking the lock. They then ransacked the house, overturning lamps, emptying drawers on the floor and making off with a collection of Kennedy half dollars, a pair of binoculars, and jewelry. Following the advice of the police, John nailed wooden sticks in the windows, making them impossible to open—for either Mary, John or the burglars. To air out the house, they open the front and back doors.

"If you ever come back to your property and you see a burglar," John advises, "Kill him. Kill him completely. He won't be able to testify because he'll be dead. Aim right between the shoulder blades."

The older residents think the apartments and the transients have changed the neighborhood's character. People don't know each other as well, they say. It is not clear whether this is because as people grow older, they tend to withdraw and be less active, or whether everyone has become less trusting and more apprehensive. Whatever the reason, Ellen Johnson, the oldest inhabitant, can no longer keep up with everyone's comings and goings. Sitting in her combination wheelchair-walker, her long hair in braids on the top of her head, she said that she had been to weddings, funerals, parties in every house on the block in the old days, but that she hadn't seen the inside of any one of them for years. Made homeless by the San Francisco earthquake in 1906, she migrated to Berkeley where she lived in churches for three months and ladled out beans to other quake victims. She moved in 1921 to her small cottage on Bonita Street. Part of her income comes from the rental of a house she owns next door. She remembered when she could have bought two lots in the vicinity for $4,000. "I didn't have 4,000 pennies then," she said. The lots were sold not long ago for $80,000.

Mrs. Johnson later did manage to buy two 66 by 135 foot lots. Although she has no intention of selling the lots, which she could do quickly at a handsome profit, she guesses her heirs will build housing on them after her death. Such construction could increase the neighborhood's population by anywhere from a half dozen to more than a hundred people because the area is zoned to permit multiple-family dwellings. Their presence nearby would have an impact on the block that everyone feels would be very detrimental.

The pressure to develop higher density dwellings in the area is being resisted by a group of 30 people who want the area down-zoned to permit only single-family houses, duplexes and small apartment structures.

One of the organizers of the group is Karen Weinrow, a 26-year-old married woman, who is particularly concerned about five- and six-story buildings. The attendant overcrowding, she says, will result in increased traffic, environmental decay, a rise in crime and a loss of intimacy. It will

also increase taxes. Ms. Weinrow's phone rings constantly and neighbors walk in the front door to talk about the situation.

> I've lived in New York, and I've seen what overpopulation in a neighborhood does to people," she says. "When you have a lot of people, you have to increase services. You have more garbage and traffic and tensions. With crowding you turn inward. What do you think happens in New York when people are knocking on the radiators all day telling you to shut up? Or, when the guy in the apartment next to you has the stereo on at 1:00 A.M.? You begin to resent it. You can see this impersonal attitude developing in Berkeley where there's crowding. Once we lived on Francisco Street near Grant, where there were a couple of big apartment houses on the block. One night a girl was raped and one of my friends watched the whole thing from her window and didn't do a thing about it.

Ms. Weinrow doesn't like politics, particularly radical politics, which she terms "a lot of crap." She also has no use for the North Berkeley Neighborhood Council.

> Go to a meeting sometime. It only represents a certain segment, mostly radicals. They want to turn the Hearst strip [owned by BART] into a farm. It isn't mature of them to think like that. What I'm doing now isn't really political. It's political in that I have to deal with the city, which is a political body, and I have to talk to people from the Socialist Workers, the radicals, and the Berkeley Democratic Club. If they ask me political questions, I shy away from them. I don't like it when they try to classify me politically.

Nevertheless, Bonita Street is permeated with politics. It is visible in the windows, many of which have been turned into billboards and wall posters; every window on the street-side of the house in which Joe Garrett lives say, "Elect Joe Garrett To The City Council." Counter-propaganda for the election of Joe's opponents is on view across the street, where radical party worker Florence McDonald lives. Although Garrett did fairly well in his neighborhood, and McDonald couldn't find anyone nearby to help her get out the radical vote, Garrett lost. (McDonald a couple of years later was elected City Auditor, and is now a Council member.)

Ms. McDonald is a short, stocky woman who wears her hair in a bun and who during the Great Depression wrote political leaflets and helped people being evicted to move their belongings. If there was anything good about the Depression, she says, it was that "everybody was poor so it forced people to be caring about others. Today everybody has so

much—a car, a job, a house—they're all busy taking care of themselves".

Ms. McDonald still tries to keep alive what she believes were the more human standards of the Depression. She and her husband have adopted a child (their own children, including the rock singer Country Joe McDonald, have grown up), she picks up hitchhikers, and on every Thursday afternoon she can be seen, red sneakers and all, carrying homebaked pastries to the Unitarian Fellowship Center.

McDonald and Garrett are interesting contrasts. McDonald makes no secret of her past Communist affiliations, talks like a den mother, and looks for all the world as though she were in the middle of organizing a blueberry picking expedition of grandchildren somewhere on the coast of Maine. Garrett, depicted by his enemies as a tool of the corporate liberal establishment, has developed a faintly Marxist analysis of politics. Long-haired, he sometimes wears a blue velvet smoking jacket and has a photograph of himself with Lightning Hopkins and Booker White, whom he brought to Berkeley in his college days when he founded the Berkeley Blues Festival. On the wall is a big poster of Bobby Kennedy, and a photograph of himself with Bella Abzug.

McDonald, the radical, believes in the old-fashioned political approach—that it is possible to organize a community just by getting people to know each other a little better. Garrett, the liberal, doesn't see things that way. He is skeptical about the existence of the "community spirit" that is supposed to be latent in Berkeley. "People learn to cooperate with each other not because they are neighbors or share some abstract ideal of ideologies," he says. "Your concerns are based on your age, your race, your economic status and your social class."

(Garrett was not elected to the City Council, but he was appointed to the Board of the Redevelopment Agency, where he became its most good-natured and philosophical member.)

There was a time when an old truck painted bright blue and filled with lettuce, onions, tomatoes, cucumbers, celery, radishes and melons was a socializing force on Bonita Street. As the customers stood in line waiting for two long-haired, bare-chested salesmen in cutoffs to take their orders, they would look around and talk to each other. These days there is not as much street conversation as before. Yet when there was a traffic accident on the corner of Bonita and Cedar, people materialized with blankets and sleeping bags, somebody called the police, and people gave names as witnesses.

One ritual that never changes is the children's procession to Whittier School every weekday morning to where a 40-year-old woman in an orange jacket stops the cars so the children can run across the street. Her face is one of the few black ones in the neighborhood, but she is less of an

alien than some of the people who live there. She knows most of the children, cats' and dogs' names, recognizes the faces of the women who walk to Shattuck Avenue at noon to do their shopping, and knows the young man who comes to the corner of Cedar and Bonita every morning to stand motionless facing the sun with his eyes closed for 15 minutes. She is also acquainted with the crises that take place on the front porch of a women's commune—screaming arguments, a car being driven away furiously, a reconciliation two or three days later. But she is gone by the time the children set up their four o'clock lemonade stands and throw pebbles at the competition.

The grownups have their rituals too. Marilynn McGregor offers her friends "protein lifts" (whole wheat crackers and cheese). Plum Greenberg has afternoon consciousness-raising sessions. Bernadette Giannini dispenses home-made beer to drop-ins around half-past five in the afternoon. An early riser on Sunday morning settles himself down on a neighbor's porch, very gently reads the *Examiner and Chronicle*, and then puts it back looking as if not a page had been turned. And a few hippies still come back on Halloween asking for drugs instead of candy.

Conversations below Tenth Street. There are usually a lot of people at home on Seventh, Eighth, Ninth, and Tenth Streets, no matter what the time of day; inside cooking or cleaning with the TV on, or out in the garden or front yard, watering a lawn or hosing off the sidewalks. Years ago the neighborhood used to be mainly white, now it is a little bit of everything. Many of the oldest people are white, some of them, like Harriet Rentfrow, a widow who has more than 80 years of Berkeley living behind her.

She weaves old memories together with observations on the present state of affairs, and all the while she is reminiscing she is looking out the window. This juxtaposition of past and present is also apparent in her living room, where she has a shoebox of dried rose petals, a TV set, a pile of ancient letters on a modern table, some brightly designed cushions she has crocheted for an old rocking chair, and some photographs of young people now dead and buried.

She remembers when the district was built by a lumber dealer who had an enormous windmill that supplied water to a group of houses which formed a small settlement of white people in the area. She pauses to watch what is going on across the street at the house of a black woman who has just died. Mrs. Rentfrow can see the minister go up the steps and ring the bell. A young woman answers and bursts into tears. A station wagon of relatives arrives, and a teenage boy sits on a porch step with his head buried in his hands, thrusting away a woman who tries to console him.

Today is Mrs. Rentfrow's 85th birthday. She has been lying on her straightening board, which helps her arthritic back. She lowers herself into a chair. She tells how the neighborhood changed many years ago:

> Colored people came here. It was a great experience for me. They were nice, settled families. But now another element has moved in, and people don't trust each other anymore. Kids across the street came in and stole my watch and my transistor radio.
>
> One time I had just gotten off the bus and stopped to talk to a colored lady. A young kid on the corner looked at me kind of funny. He was about 11, nice-looking boy. He walked past me a couple of times, then he got a bigger kid to help him. The bigger boy snatched my purse and threw it into the yard here inside the fence. I gave him a swish with my crutch but I missed him. They used to shoot holes in my windows with air guns, even though I used to give them all the plums off my trees. I left them ladders, said they could take all they wanted but I didn't want them climbing in the branches. Well, when I came back from that World's Fair in Seattle, sure enough they'd broken several branches, and there was fruit going to waste all over the yard. When I was packing to go to the Seattle Fair, I heard a loud noise. I found out that a 62-year-old woman had been raped. The police went after the bad boys in the neighborhood then. But a Portugese woman lived here and her son heard a rape under his window and didn't call the police because he was afraid of reprisal. Isn't that terrible? Another man down the street saw a gang rape a young girl and beat up her boyfriend, but he was afraid to call, too.

Mrs. Rentfrow is not impressed with the few city officials she has dealt with. When reaching for her hat on a high shelf, she fell and broke a bone in her foot. At that very moment the doorbell rang. "It was four city inspectors, people from the health and fire department inspecting for hazards in the home. I showed them my foot, there was a swelling the size of a walnut. They didn't even offer to take me to the hospital."

A few blocks away, on 10th street, Jane Daigle lives in a one-bedroom frame house which is becoming a financial burden because her taxes are going up so fast. She is 88, appears to be of Creole ancestry, from Louisiana. Her white hair is tied in braids above her ear and she is wearing a flowered full-length apron over a housedress and nylon stockings. The living room is spotless, with walls covered with pictures of relatives and friends, black and white, a baptismal record and some painted china plates.

Mrs. Daigle has been in Berkeley 15 years and says she has never known the neighborhood to be so bad as it is now. The house next door

has been robbed, children tore down her fence which she can't afford to fix, her tools and a bedroom dresser have been stolen, and the garden hose has been slashed three times.

Mrs. Daigle thinks well of Berkeley policemen. "I had a stroke and my house caught fire and my little poodle was killed. The policemen came right away."

The past rises around her. "Five children my mother had, and they are all dead but me. My mother was a good soul. Always wanted us to be better dressed than anyone else. Everywhere we went we brought our sisters and brother with us. I asked God to let me die before them, but I was left to raise my sister's four children." In her early years she was a cook in hotels, restaurants, railroad and levee camps, and sawmills. Then she worked for 22 years for a San Francisco family. "That woman I worked for she was so good for me. Each year she buys me all the clothes I needed. Her son the first of every month takes me down to buy groceries. His sister fills my deep freezer. She tells me once, Jane, I tell you the truth, I love you like my own mother. Those people, I have to say it, they aren't like most white people. They are all good to me, just like a sister and brother."

In spite of her arthritis, Mrs. Daigle walks in her garden every morning. "I planted a garden, and I can raise fruit, figs, not like those hard rock-like figs you get in the store. And my Indian peach trees, they're so lovely."

She raises herself from her chair and hobbles into the kitchen, and puts two of her backyard tomatoes in a bag. "Take these, and this Indian peach pit. Plant it in the ground, and it will bear in two years."

Just a block away, on Ninth Street, Archie Vaughn, a rather stout man in his late sixties with a furry Russian hat perched on his head, volunteers the information to a doorbell ringer that the lady there works, and won't be home until evening. Vaughn has made himself something of a full-time sentry for the block. He is optimistic about his neighbors, whom he regards as quiet and friendly, mostly settled, middle-aged people. He says the younger generation respects him, that he has no problems with the children.

"They're mostly sports-minded, the kids around here," he says. "If I catch them doing something wrong, I talk to them and try to keep them on the right track."

Vaughn opines that there is a "lot of thuggin' and muggin'" going on, and that women don't go out at night like they used to, but he blames the situation on people from other areas. He is annoyed that when somebody who's probably from Oakland or Richmond breaks into a house, the local children get blamed. His apartment was broken into and his TV and stereo were stolen while he was in the hospital, but since then the neighbors are

always checking to see if things are all right. He has his neighbors' phone numbers, so that if something happens or he doesn't feel well he can call them.

One thing the neighbors are trying to break up, Vaughn says, is dope pushing. He says there is a citizens' group on the block that gets the police to talk to them about crime prevention. The Berkeley police "are pretty nice to deal with, after you know 'em. Some call 'em pigs, but I don't have no kick against them. All you gotta do is call, and they'll be here."

The watchdog committee, many of whom are senior citizens, is "strictly from the block," Vaughn says. "You know they been calling this a ghetto down here and we want to get rid of that idea. We look out for everybody."

Vaughn has detected two burglaries in progress, and has identified the burglars. "One thing about it, you maybe walk around this neighborhood and some smarties will try to pull a knife. But there's always someone to watch and get the guy's license plate."

"A lot of young girls get a knife put to their throat," Vaughn says. "This is the work of outtatowners. They'll come over here and do all that devilment—snatch pocket books—and when people get their welfare checks on the 1st and 13th of the month, the outtatowners will snatch them out of the mailboxes. We urge everybody to put locks on their boxes and double locks on their doors."

Despite sentry duty, Vaughn manages to spend quite a bit of time away from Ninth Street. He goes to the St. John's Missionary Church and is a regular Thursday attender of the Jolly 30's Social Club where people from all over the East Bay dance, play cards, take an occasional trip to Reno, "discuss things," and support a girls' baseball team. He uses the health clinic on University and Sixth, where he is courteously treated. He has occasional conversations with University students who live on the block and says his granddaughter likes the public school she attends. Vaughn has few complaints against the politicians, either. He is a ticket splitter who doesn't like radical council member Loni Hancock but who admires Congressman Ron Dellums, with whom she is aligned. Of Dellums, he says "That's my man he's the best."

Mr. and Mrs. James G———, a black couple in their sixties, live across the street and are not as sanguine as Vaughn about how things are going in the neighborhood. James, a thin soft-spoken man with a short Afro, owns his neat two-story house even though he is now on a disability pension. He says the neighborhood has gone down since he arrived 22 years ago. "To be frank, it's the people, their attitude toward life. They have given up hope."

His wife, a smiling, smooth-haired woman in a gold wool dress, re-

marks that "people are not keeping up their homes. One woman nearby lets the grass grow plumb up the side of the house." Her husband adds that the landlord of one house on the block operates it like a transient hotel. "We try to set an example, you know, but those renters are in and out, and nobody is held responsible for the mess." The wife says we have nothing to do with such people. "The neighbors we know are the ones who own their own homes."

They are favorably disposed towards the schools. Their two oldest children went to Columbus Intermediate School, West Campus (the ninth grade), and Berkeley High. "The teachers were wonderful, they worked with the kids. Our little eight-year-old goes to Cragmont. He loves his teacher and you can't keep him home for nothing. If the schools have problems, its some of the kids, not the teachers that are bad."

The family's few contacts with the police have given them a good impression of the department. "We have wonderful policemen in Berkeley," James says.

> We could use a few more, though. When people break into homes, the police will come around and ask the neighbors questions. Our little boy had something caught in his throat once, and the police came with first aid right away. When our neighbors go on vacation, the police check up on their house while they're gone. When we bought the house in 1959, we had trouble with people parking and blocking our driveway. Mainly they were from this transient hotel across the street—they would park anywhere even though they got a ticket. The officer we called had the city paint red on the curb at our driveway. Well, some neighbor painted psychedelic blue over the red curb so we had to call the officer again. He looked over to that transient hotel and saw the same blue paint in the kitchen over there. He said he couldn't be sure but he thought he knew who painted the curb. He got the city to paint the curb red again.

The door of the "transient hotel" across the street is opened by Susan B———, an attractive, 24-year old white woman in jeans and a purple sweater that matches her sunglasses. The walls of her bedroom-living room are decorated with Indian print bedspreads, and there are several shelves with books, pottery, shells and decorative bottles. She explains that there are six other singles in the house, that she has been in Berkeley six months but traveled through Berkeley several times previously when she sang with a rock band. Now she is working as a receptionist in a funeral parlor. She and one of her friends intend to buy the house along with the house next door as a package deal.

Susan feels herself embattled on all sides. She has a running battle with one family on the street, and is convinced that their small boy, a "real

brat," broke one of her windows. She is annoyed with the people in the housing projects adjacent to and in back of the house. "They hassle us. If we sit in the sun, they go for the binoculars, and the kids throw fruit at us. The streets aren't really heavy, but sorta gnarly. I was hassled one night while walking home. The blocks on the way home from the Odyssey bar, where I go a lot, get pretty long and dark. I'd rather not have to carry a knife or anything like that. I don't feel any more secure here than I did in New Orleans or Washington D.C." But Susan doesn't worry about hitchhiking alone.

> I feel safer from the police in Berkeley than I have in other places. There's not that total state of paranoia when you see a squad car like with Southern cops. But I still would like to have more lights around here. I like the Berkeley police. I don't know if it's because they're college-educated or what, but they're a lot less hassle-prone than most cops. Like we smoke dope, so we're constantly aware of the possibilities. They don't hassle us at all even though they know we're a house full of freaks. I haven't heard any horror stories about them. Oh! One time I'd just bought a lid with a friend and we were standing with it on San Pablo and Addison when a police cruiser came by. We were scared, but all he said was 'You'd better stick that back in your pocket so we don't have to do anything about it.' And in my dealings, they haven't been too sexist. They don't *provoke*. I also like the fact that they're young and they look like freaks.

One person in the neighborhood who seems to be doing well is Terry Reinthaler, an appealing, curly-haired white woman in her mid-twenties. She has a neat, one-bedroom apartment in a fourplex apartment unit for which she pays $105 a month, a real bargain by Berkeley standards. She works for the city, as a recreation director, and has no family responsibilities. She knows and likes most of the people on her Eighth Street block, but her opinions about the neighborhood go from one side to another like a badminton bird over the net. She says she likes living here, but life is getting too rough for her, too many rip-offs. Her apartment has not been burgled yet because she and her neighbors band together to watch each other's places. Her car has been broken into repeatedly, however, and while she doesn't feel unsafe on the street at night, she worries about the apartment when she's out. The police have not been of much help, although they come when her car is ripped off. She says the officers she knows have never given her any bad experiences—maybe because she is a white, middle-class female. At least there is a sense of neighborliness on her block, which helps.

In her efforts to put together a recreation program for children in the

area, she has run into some problems, one of which is the bussing system developed to desegregate the schools. "It's hard for me to pull a program together when you have the kids in the local school leave for their homes in the hills in the middle of the afternoon." She blames the City Council for long delays in starting construction of the recreation center in nearby Kinney Park. And when the center was completed a gang of kids got in one night and vandalized the building. In spite of these misfortunes, Ms. Reinthaler, her supervisor and a staff of eight have been able to provide local youngsters with a chance to swim, go to the movies, take trips and have sandwich and milk lunches provided by Department of Agriculture money.

Everybody, not just the kids, needs a recreation center because "this community needs a focal point", Ms. Reinthaler says. "It's too disjointed now. All these people of different races and ages and life-styles need a place where they can be together." But time is running short.

"We are losing many families in this area. That's scary and it's going to continue because young unattached people are moving in and displacing the older families. They come to Berkeley because they want to groove." As she talks about the neighborhood, Ms. Reinthaler grows more and more depressed. Finally she bursts out that she has decided to move.

"There's no way to have a garden here. The kids will tear it up. I'm tired of rip-offs."

Neighbor Dorothy has long strawberry blonde hair, a freckled face, jeans, and a turtleneck sweater. She comes from South Carolina and has lived with her "boyfriend" for more than five years—"I guess they call that a stable relationship"—and her four-year-old daughter. The living room of the family's one-bedroom house is cluttered, with a cracked mirror hanging over an unworkable fireplace painted hot pink. The furniture is vintage Salvation Army, except for a telephone cable spool converted into a table. Dorothy is unemployed. Her boyfriend repairs bicycles and paints. Some of his work, brightly colored and unfinished, is on the walls.

Dorothy hasn't decided what to do about her daughter's schooling. She hesitates to put her in the public schools because of the "tensions among the students." Maybe she will put her in a private school or maybe she'll just get out of Berkeley altogether. The daughter is more trusting than her mother, and her mother is worried about that, especially when it is time for her daughter to go to school. The daughter even trusts the police, whom her mother despises.

Before Dorothy came to Berkeley, she was busted:

The police didn't feed me for ten hours, and I was pregnant and

throwing up. I'm sure they're just as bad here. I hate them with a passion. During the riots I woke up one morning and found the National Guard in my living room. I wouldn't ever call them for anything. But they come around a lot just checking the area. My daughter likes them. She calls them the "peoples' police." The other day she saw a cop and said that out loud. The guy puffed up his chest and walked away proud.

Everybody in the neighborhood comments favorably on the Alameda County Bus system that provides them with low-cost and predictable transportation all over Berkeley and the East Bay. One of these green and white AC Transit buses is driven by John Brownson, age 37, white and married, with two children, 10- and 5-years-old, and a wife who writes poetry and works as a governess and a housekeeper for a wealthy Claremont District family. The Brownson clan consider themselves part of a "mega-family" that includes friends and Brownson's former wife. The Brownsons rent a three-bedroom house on Eighth Street, the living room walls of which are plastered with notices of poetry readings, nature posters and a poem or two. The kitchen sink at the moment is full of dishes, and the cooking pots and the gas stove are almost as ancient as the antique coffee grinder on the wall.

The Brownsons have no intention of leaving Berkeley. "As long as we've lived here, it's been stable, safe," he says.

Yeah we were pretty uptight when we arrived. We'd never lived so deep in a predominantly black neighborhood. But we got to know people and found it was essentially a middle-class neighborhood. You still have to be street-wise. We got ripped off after we moved in, but that's hardly unique, no matter what area you live in. The feeling of community is really what attracts me about Berkeley. Of being part of a rapidly evolving cultural phenomenon. I feel very much a part of it. My wife and I are involved in a lot of things—psycho-social phenomena. It's not psychic healing, it's consciousness-raising of a different kind. My wife has spent many months in encounter groups, and I'm in a men's and women's liberation group. We're trying to shake ourselves out of old patterns.

Brownson's son goes to Oxford School, a K-3 school, the daughter to Columbus School (4-6 grades). "I like Oxford more. Columbus is larger, and has attendance problems. It's a good school, but the curriculum gets kinky. My daughter just went through a year of Asian studies and she's a red-headed Irish kid. I got tired of her telling me about the Japanese relocation camps in 1941."

Brownson has an MA in theater arts from Los Angeles State, but he

chose to stay in Berkeley and drive a bus rather than go someplace else for an acting job. His degree, he says, worked against him in getting his job.

"I'm a guilt-ridden liberal. I'm not as politically active as I should be, but I'm into such a personal trip I just don't have the time or energy. My friends still say I'm selfish, and I come back with the tired argument that I have to get myself together first. I had my political era in the late sixties, running from The Man and all that."

He has changed politically, and so have the old radical groups he used to run with. The Black Panthers symbolize the change.

> They found radicalism nonproductive, so they get pragmatic and get positive feedback. They're still far from pussycats, though. I'm almost certain they have a little protection racket going in West Oakland, but they have mellowed out from a few years ago. I used to have the 88 West Oakland bus route late at night. And every night I would let this guy ride free for a Panther newspaper. I put the paper up on the steering wheel where everybody could see it. At about 11:30 at night that area was no joke. And mean guys would come on the bus, see the Panther paper, and I'd say, "Evening brother," and they'd look again and say, "evening brother," and sit down.

Mention of the 1968 and 1969 riots turns Brownson's memories back to the police.

> They're a strange group. I've had quite a few contacts with them. My earliest impression was that they were easygoing because of their khaki-colored uniform. The Berkeley Police Department likes to present a relaxed impression from their uniforms, not like the Navy blue, flak jacket guys. I have never been clubbed by them. If anything I've found them too formal, too polite. If they got familiar some people might get offended. One thing I'm really ticked by are the campus cops. The first time I saw one of them with an Afro out to here, I was freaked. Then he was joined shortly by a hairy guy with a cowboy hat. Even so, essentially, I fear and distrust police. But we called them when we were ripped-off. They didn't do much, but they were amiable.

Brownson reaches into the past.

> In 1969 I came up from LA to get myself killed at Peoples' Park. I was young and fresh and stupid and hadn't been clubbed lately. The University had just put up a fence, and a whole crowd was gathering around to tear it down. So the BPD came down the street all in formation. You know, with clubs and everything. I was all hot, my

adrenalin going, and I told myself I would not move, that they would have to march right over me. They came closer and closer, and I was madder and madder, until I looked at this one old guy at the end of the line, the guy was supposed to clash with me. He was about 40, you know, with a little paunch, and he looked very tired, just like a nice guy that hasn't had any sleep. And when the big confrontation was supposed to come, he just looked me in the eye and said, "Would you *PLEASE* move along, sir." I was so flabbergasted I moved along.

The five-year old son comes in crying, and pushes a cut thumb onto his father's palm. His small black companions are waiting outside for him until he gets repaired.

8 A Dialogue About Children

A Time for Asking Questions. For the first half of the twentieth century, the Berkeley public schools, like its political system, were run like the railroads of the times, by amiable, white conservatives who believed that if something had worked well for a number of years, it ought not to be tampered with. To all outward appearances, the city's schools had done very well, establishing a reputation of academic excellence and operating in untroubled fashion with a competent and generally uncomplaining staff. Berkeley parents, by and large, were satisfied with their schools. Such approval was easy to come by in a largely white community where a small black minority accepted middle-class values and strove for middle-class status.

But the city and the society of which it was a part was changing and a consensus built on early Twentieth-century values would soon break down. The outbreak of World War II set in motion influences which drastically changed the values and structure of the city's political and educational arrangements. The arrival of large numbers of Southern blacks attracted by jobs in wartime defense plants in the Bay Area produced a sudden steep increase in Berkeley's black population to 11 percent by 1950 and 19.6 percent by 1960.

Many black families who had come to Berkeley in the first three decades of the century and who had bought property and achieved a degree of financial security were apprehensive about the impact on their schools and neighborhoods of a new wave of blacks from the impoverished and educationally disadvantaged backgrounds they had escaped a generation before.

But Berkeley's post-World War II blacks had one thing in common with the older black population which united them. They were both the victims of institutionalized discrimination in jobs, housing and education that was as much a part of the Berkeley landscape as the eucalyptus trees in the hills. Nowhere was this pattern of racial discrimination more apparent than in the public schools. Not until 1942, after a long campaign by civic-minded women of both races, was the first black teacher employed. Additional black teachers were hired very slowly and consigned to kindergarten despite credentials entitling them to teach through the secondary level.

An indication of the acceptability of anti-black hiring practices as late as 1954 was the statement of the Superintendent of Schools that he would never appoint a black teacher to Berkeley High School. The high school didn't get its first black teacher until two years later. When a group of white parents at Emerson elementary school pointed out to the superintendent the advantages of having a black teacher in their school, it took them more than two years before they got their first full-time black teacher in 1957. The extent of discrimination against minority applicants for teaching positions was revealed a year later by figures which showed that the school system employed only 36 teachers of minority backgrounds. This despite the fact that nearly a third of the school population was black.

Such a situation was a reflection of a similar lack of black participation in the city's governmental affairs. Although a few blacks had been appointed to commissions, none had won elective office. Only when the political situation changed did the educational system change also. There were three ingredients for change. The first was a black community growing in political sophistication and numbers; the second was a new and liberal Democratic Party organization intent on pushing governmental and educational reforms by gaining control of the Board of Education and the City Council. The third ingredient for change was national: the liberalization of Berkeley politics and educational policy took place against the background of events such as *Brown vs. Topeka;* the Supreme Court decision outlawing de jure segregation of the schools; the Freedom Marches and sit-ins; Dr. Martin Luther King's Montgomery, Alabama, bus boycott; the march on Washington; and the civil rights agendas of the Roosevelt, Truman, and Eisenhower administrations.

These events and the trends they symbolized, dramatizing the social and economic injustices endemic in American society, changed the way millions of Americans looked at each other and their institutions. In Berkeley the fifties and sixties became a time for asking questions and reexamining established practices. Once they had begun to ask questions, Berkeleyans discovered something else about themselves. They were

immensely stimulated by the dialogue their questions provoked—a dialogue distinguished by its civility among people of different backgrounds who had not talked to each other before.

In such an atmosphere, long-standing criticisms of Berkeley's status quo began to emerge. The dissatisfaction voiced by civil rights groups, the new liberal Democratic Party organization, the teachers' unions, parents, and nonpartisan civic groups such as the League of Women Voters, more and more began to center on the discrimination against minorities in housing, employment and education.

The range of criticisms of the public schools was indicated as early as 1957 by the Reverend Roy Nichols, (now the Methodist Bishop of Western Pennsylvania) who four years later was to become the first black elected to the Board of Education. In a statement to the Board of Education on behalf of the NAACP he asked a series of questions that identified educational problems with which the people of Berkeley were to grapple with from then on. Reverend Nichols' statement inspired scores of meetings, some attended by thousands of people. Foundation grants were obtained to underwrite educational experiments, which, in the words of one superintendent's application to the Ford Foundation, would "demonstrate to the nation that minority groups can become an asset to the community." Citizens' committees were appointed to inquire into ways Berkeley schools could better serve minority children whose academic achievements as a group were lagging far behind that of white children.

These citizens' committees were unusual in that they were formed to produce solutions, not delay them. Such a committee, of 36 people chaired by John Hadsell, a Presbyterian minister, became the catalyst for a chain of events which led to the desegregation of all Berkeley schools. The Hadsell Committee's 1963 report revealed to Berkeley citizens the extent to which residential housing patterns had racially segregated the public schools. In the affluent hills areas, the percentage of white children in the elementary schools ran from 92 percent to 98 percent, while in the flatlands, the percentage of black students in the elementary schools ran from 63 percent to 98 percent.

The Hadsell Committee's recommendation became the basis for the Board of Education's decision to desegregate two junior high schools in 1964, convert another into an all-city ninth grade in 1965, recruit more minority teachers, modify attendance districts for some elementary schools, and revise the tracking system which was funneling black children into preparation for vocational rather than academic careers.

The commotion that followed the Board of Education's adoption of these first five steps towards school desegregation and the elimination of racial discrimination in employment and housing had been in control of

the City Council and the Board since 1961, their views did not enjoy universal support. In the year the Hadsell report was presented, a referendum prohibiting racial discrimination was rejected by Berkeley voters. And in May 1964, just a few months before the desegregation plan was to go into effect, a Parents' Association for Neighborhood Schools launched a campaign to recall two of the Board members who had supported the desegregation plan.

The recall campaign was a test of the ability of Berkeley citizens to handle rationally a conflict that could have exploded into an ugly racial confrontation. But although the community was deeply divided, there were people on both sides who were thinking not only about what they wanted from their schools, but what they wanted from their adversaries. It was clear, whatever the results of the election, that the winning side would have to have the cooperation of the losers. This realization tempered the political exchanges. Another way in which the recall movement may have actually improved the political climate was the necessity for the closest kind of communication between the supporters of desegregation in the black and white communities—a new experience for many citizens of both groups.

Although recall was defeated decisively, by about 60 percent of the 38,000 ballots cast, much depended on how the 40 percent minority would react to their defeat; with continued opposition and resort to the courts, or with cooperation. Some of the parents opposed to desegregation moved away and others placed their children in private schools, but, for the most part, families who had opposed desegregation kept their children in the schools and in hundreds of cases gave their active support to make the program work.

As a result, during the period from 1964–67, when the Board finished its plans for desegregation of the elementary schools, there were no more political challenges. Principals, teachers, parent groups, citizens' committees, the University of California's School of Education, all collaborated with Superintendent Sullivan in developing plans for a smooth transition.

An idea of the spirit of the times was conveyed by Carol Sibley, a white-haired hill resident who was one of the two Board members surviving the recall. Years later she was to write that during the period of preparation

> hundreds of letters poured across the Board members' desks. They came from both supporters and opponents of any plan to achieve total integration. But for the most part they were thoughtful, carefully-worded letters accepting integration as an ultimate goal, but fearing for the resultant lessening of the quality of education. Some felt

the money spent on busing could be much better spent on hiring more teachers and/or counsellors, supplying better textbooks, or in a myriad of ways that would compensate minority children for their previous poorer education. The tone of the letters for the most part was moderate, even when strongly critical.

In retrospect, 1968 seems to have been a most significant year for the city of Berkeley. It marked the beginning of a grand experiment, one of the first voluntarily undertaken by an American city to desegregate an entire public school system, with the hope of bringing the islands of the city into contact with one another. Perhaps the many encounters, large and small, which had prepared them for the act of desegregation were as important as the act itself.

The story of what happened to the community's high hopes for a truly integrated school system is illustrated by the experience of Longfellow School—an experience which was more typical than not of other Berkeley schools at the intermediate and junior high levels.

9 The Longfellow School

The Matlin Brigade. If any school was going to have problems with desegregation, it would have to be Longfellow. Overnight everything about the school would be transformed except the rambling, unlovely, noisy and deteriorating building in which the transformation was to take place. From a kindergarten through sixth grade school serving a largely black neighborhood, it would become an intermediate school (fourth through sixth grade). There would be a new principal and an almost brand-new teaching staff. The pupil population, already large, would double which meant that from the very first day of its new life, Longfellow would be badly overcrowded. And from an institution "owned" by minority children, who constituted 95 percent of the school enrollment, Longfellow would become a racially balanced school with a large number of its newcomers bused in from white neighborhoods in North Berkeley and the hill areas. Many of the children who remained in the school from the previous year would regard these newcomers as invaders taking over their turf. Parents were uncertain and apprehensive about what would happen.

The new principal was John Matlin, an energetic man in his fifties who as principal of Whittier elementary school had developed a successful team teaching system and an excellent teaching staff. A good percentage of this staff had volunteered to go with him to Longfellow. In addition to his full-time job at Whittier, Matlin had spent hundreds of hours planning what he would do at Longfellow and training the nucleus of Whittier teachers who were going with him.

In the process of preparing, however, Matlin discovered something

which did not become apparent to many teachers and principals until months later. Despite its heavily publicized commitment to desegregation, the office of the Superintendent of Schools was displaying a remarkable indifference to the needs of the people who were going to have to make desegregation work. When Matlin requested the services of a half-time secretary to help him with his extra work, he was refused, so he stayed up many times past midnight, shuffling IBM cards, typing memos, setting up work schedules, getting ready for teachers briefings, and exploring ideas for a new curriculum. Then, when summer rolled around, he met regularly with the new Longfellow teaching staff, some of whom were new to California.

The task of piloting any school through its desegregation would have been a formidable task in itself. But the central administration compounded the problem by poor planning. When Longfellow intermediate school opened, it had over 1,000 pupils—more than many high schools. Of its staff of 38 classroom teachers and several resource teachers, less than half a dozen had ever taught in the school before. The average class size, instead of being scaled down during this time of transition, had actually been increased to nearly 30.

Matlin attempted to deal with the overcrowding by dividing Longfellow into separate schools: School A in the main building and School B in temporary buildings across the street. To ease the burden on teachers and assure flexibility in grouping, he introduced the concept of ungraded classes, multi-aged pupil clusters and team teaching.

From the beginning Matlin impressed upon his teachers and the parents that he wanted Longfellow to be much more than a place where black, Asian and white children learned to adjust to each other socially. His main objective was to build a teaching staff with enough imagination to develop a curriculum adapted to a very diverse student population. If these goals were attained, Matlin reasoned, the school would be well on the way to integrating itself.

"We had a pretty tough time emotionally, but we did try to give the children a sense of personal identity in that great big kettle," Matlin, now a Professor of Education at the University of California, recalled.

> With the division of the school into two parts there were boundary disputes, with the children of one school afraid to go into the other. One school had more blacks, so it looked like a black-white thing, but it wasn't. There were fights and robberies and extortions, but we finally narrowed it down to 25 or 30 hard-core culprits. I met with the children as much as possible, let them know I was the principal, and that I was in charge. Once they understood that, the kids were very friendly.

This bursting barrel of children did not go unnoticed in the neighborhood, and there were some unsolicited visits, such as the one from the Black Panthers who had their office down the street. A Panther delegation informed Matlin that there were two racially segregated classes in the school. He hadn't heard about that, Matlin responded, and he asked his Panther visitors to identify the classes. After checking around, the Panthers came back to Matlin to report that the rumor of the segregated classes was unfounded. A member of the John Birch society complained about white children being discriminated against. A Panther parent claimed just the reverse was true. Both of them departed satisfied with the way things were going.

Matlin remembered the neighborhood as being very supportive of the school. Even the prostitutes around the corner on Sacramento Street would wave to him and called him "Dr. Matlin" as he left school in the afternoon. "Most of our problems that year were with the Board of Education," he said. "They should not have put so many children in the school. Even if we hadn't been undergoing this sort of a critical baptism, the buildings would have been disastrously overcrowded. They should have brought in a bulldozer and knocked it down. It was a terrible place, full of confusion and noise."

The irony of all this, Matlin said, was that before the school was desegregated, it had had a pupil population of only 600, two very able black principals in succession, much smaller class sizes (19–20 children), and plenty of money for special teaching aides. If he hadn't known otherwise, Matlin would have thought that the Superintendent was purposely increasing the pressures on the school to make it fail.

Nevertheless, in the opinion of one of the teachers who accompanied Matlin from Whittier to Longfellow, Longfellow had not only been desegregated, but it was also integrating itself.

> The kids were committed to integration, the parents were committed, and I think most of the teachers would say that that first year was a wonderful experience. My own class was marvelous. The two years I had that class were the highlights of my ten-year teaching career. They were beautifully integrated children. Fifty percent of my kids were black, there were a few Asians and Chicanos, and the rest were white. I didn't lose any children. Nobody moved away. It was a very positive class, positive in their loyalty towards this new school. And Dr. Matlin had a very professional aura about him. He handled the staff, a very sophisticated staff, beautifully. We worked long hours and worked hard and we felt very good about it. Then Dr. Matlin left. It was the end of a very good time.

Coming Apart. After Matlin departed to accept a position on the faculty of the UC School of Education, the atmosphere at Longfellow changed almost overnight. The person most responsible, according to most of the teachers at Longfellow, was the new Superintendent of Schools, Richard Foster, who had succeeded Neil Sullivan just as the elementary schools were being desegregated. In past years, several elementary schools including Longfellow had been designated laboratory schools in a cooperative arrangement with the School of Education and the University of California. Superintendent Sullivan, who had had excellent relationships with the University, had consulted with it before appointing the principals for the lab schools. Matlin, for instance, had been appointed principal of Longfellow only after he had been interviewed and approved by a faculty committee from the School of Education. Although the committees recommendations were advisory only, they were always accepted by the Superintendent.

All this changed under Foster, a man of great personal charm, who from the outset had given the impression that he wanted to lessen the importance of the University.

As the principal of another very successful lab school put it:

> When it came to replacing Matlin at Longfellow, we thought the selection process would be maintained. Then Foster called a huge community meeting of staff, administration, and parents. Speaking as chairman, he announced that he would singlehandedly choose the new Longfellow principal. This effectively eliminated the university from the partnership in making personnel decisions for the lab schools—in the end, it meant the destruction of the lab schools. Subsequently, Foster selected Richard Hunter, a black, as Matlin's replacement. Hunter did not have a doctorate, although university policy was that principals of the lab schools should have the degree. At the time I wasn't convinced a doctorate was necessary, but later I understood, because Hunter as Longfellow principal spent a lot of his time working on his Ph.D.

If Foster wasn't listening to the University, he was attentive to his principal supporter on the Board of Education. Hazaiah Williams was the leader of the Black ACES (A Cultural and Educational Society), a small group of teachers who stressed black identity and the need for "blackening" the curriculum. What "blackening" the curriculum meant, exactly, was not defined at the time. It remained for Hunter to provide the definition after he took over Longfellow.

Under Hunter the emphasis changed from integration and a concern for the education of all children regardless of race, to one of special almost

exclusive preoccupation with raising the test scores of the black students and emphasis on black studies.

Of themselves, these changes would not have created a problem: teachers were working hard to reduce the gap in achievement. But when the principal, in response to pressure from newly-hired black militants, decreed that henceforth white and black teachers would not meet together as a faculty, but would meet separately off the school grounds (since on-site segregation was illegal), the morale began to crumble.[1] The disintegration of faculty morale accelerated as it became apparent that the black studies program, the purpose of which had been to create understanding between children of different races, was being taught in such a way as to alienate them from one another.

"The bad part about it was that we started getting people in the school like Brother Chaka,"[2] one of Matlin's white teachers said.

> He had no teaching credentials—the state wouldn't certify him because he wouldn't take the courses required. He came in with this whole idea of "Let's hate whitey," and he didn't make any bones about it. He taught black history with this vindictive attitude of let's punish the white child. He told a group of teachers that the only way a black child was going to grow and prosper in this kind of setting was to break down the white child's ego. And that was what he was going to do: expose the white children to the things they and their parents were doing to destroy the black children.

Brother Chaka carried on this way, the teacher said, "to the point where black parents and white parents were pulling their kids out of black studies, and Hunter would do nothing about it. A black principal of another school took his daughter out of the program. Brother Chaka wouldn't allow anybody to visit his classes. Foster defended him and said it was the responsibility of the school district to protect people like this man who didn't follow the general rules and regulations. And then one day he magically disappeared."

> However he left his mark because he trained a number of other people who came along in black studies. Black teachers who before had been very positive and friendly to white teachers were separating off from us. When Hunter held segregated staff meetings, I would not attend them. Many of the white teachers went. I said, "Why are you going?" and they claimed they were curious. I'm convinced they went out of fear.

[1]This practice, of racially-segregated staff meetings, was not confined to Longfellow. The author noted that at Martin Luther King Junior High the same practice prevailed for a while.

[2]Brother Chaka had come to Berkeley from the Sausalito school system in Marin County across the Bay where he had been fired for allegedly stirring up racial tensions.

> Everything was on a hate syndrome, and the Asian people decided they wanted their children in Asian cluster classes because the Asian children were terrified. The Asian parents decided if the blacks were going to dictate to them, the Asians were going to have their way too. So I simply closed my door. I had other job offers, but I was not going to run out on my children. I talked to the Superintendent about the situation at Longfellow, but he said there was nothing that could be done about it because it was a political situation. So I went back to my children. The parents were pleased at what I was doing and the children were happy so we continued to learn in the middle of bedlam. And then Hunter took another job out of the state. The school was just ready to go up in smoke because of all the hate and distrust and no material and no supplies.

One of the most outspoken critics of black studies as taught at Longfellow during the Hunter regime was Nelson Polsby, a Professor of Political Science at the University of California. A strong supporter of desegregation, he finally took his daughter out of Longfellow when he became convinced that the force of the black studies program was to resegregate the children mentally.

"I heard the principal's statement in which he said black awareness was the most important goal," Polsby said.

> This took the form of black studies classes conducted by a strong and dynamic woman who made a specialty out of putting down white people, of making angry comments about the terrible things white people had done to black people—all the while looking at the white children. A lot of parents were disturbed by what the children were saying so we sat in on classes, and the children were right. We went to the principal. I spoke to him for two hours. I tried to get across the fact that we wanted an integrated school where the children could learn to work together, and that harassing white kids with past sins that white people had perpetuated on the ancestors of black kids was not going to get us anywhere . . . Hunter as much as said if you don't like it, you can keep your kid at home, no child will be excused.

The particular black studies teacher, said Polsby, "behaved badly even with the younger children," he said. "In one class, without warning, she ordered all blonde dumbbells to leave the room. A blonde child of one of our friends refused to leave, and she had a long argument. The teacher said later that she was conducting an experiment to show white children how it felt to be mistreated. But she never told the kids what she was about, and she handled it in a very aggressive and ugly way."

In this situation many of the new white teachers who had replaced the Whittier contingent were less than helpful. In contrast to some black teachers who were secretly distressed about the turn of events, they encouraged the cultivation of guilt feelings in white children. When one mother who worked as a volunteer classroom aide complained to a young, single, white teacher about what was going on, the teacher responded that the mother was handicapped by her white, middle-class background.

Few white parents chose to object to the direction the school was taking under Hunter. Other white parents supported him. At one PTA meeting Hunter described his effort to blacken the curriculum, after which the black and white parents broke up into discussion groups. When one white parent blurted out that he thought that the purpose of the meeting was to promote integration and that Hunter's program was doing the opposite, he was attacked from all directions.

"The worst of the attacks came from the whites," the parent said.

> As I was leaving the table, one black middle-aged father came and said "I agree with everything you said." I never went back. I heard they set up encounter groups with parents to help them reach out to each other. But to me it was an open invitation for the parents to be aggressive. The same situation prevailed at Hillside [a kindergarten through third grade feeder school for Longfellow]. The school set up a meeting to talk about black studies. The meeting was packed with black studies people from Longfellow. They took over the meeting. The white parents sat there or agreed very loudly. Very few stood up and dissented. We were treated with excessive hostility by what I can only describe as the guilty white liberals. The black parents said very little.

Given the low morale, the overcrowding, the lack of equipment and recreation space at Longfellow, and its critical importance to success of the integration program, one might have expected Hunter's successor to have been given extra time and resources. Instead the new principal was a man who also was responsible for directing another school, the combined ninth grade West Campus school. Fortunately for Longfellow, John Newton was an unusually gifted and sensitive man, with long experience in school administration, though without elementary school experience.

"I never encountered a staff so divided," Newton, a wiry, energetic black in his fifties, remarked.

> But I did have a very enjoyable time. I tried to get a semblance of respect from everybody for everybody else. I tried to put warmth into the building and staff. I think we brought back humor and trust. I was tested pretty hard to see if I was going to go the route they had seen

> before. There was this contest to see how black you were. I followed the old pattern there, trying to rub off some of the rough edges. There were many faculty who were upset at this polarization, absolutely. They wanted to see us get back on the track. Games were played pretty severely there. You'd have some teachers sitting in isolation, segregated in the lunchroom. We had some blacks pushing hostility, whites resisting.

Newton discovered that the bulk of the children had not been as affected by the turmoil as the staff and parents. He thought that they had "learned in spite of the hassles" and that they were generally happy with the school. He also concluded that he had many outstanding teachers who needed a good climate in which to teach. So he endeavored to give them such a climate.

One of his first acts was to revise the black studies program. "It was a bed of thorns, black studies. It got worse after we lost one very good teacher who had been a brake on the situation." Newton had his troubles, just as he had had at West Campus, where some militant blacks had objected to his insistence that black studies be taught in such a way as to bridge gaps rather than create them. But within weeks he had turned the school slowly around. He told the staff that "the walls were going to be torn down even if I have to do it myself. Teachers were going to integrate themselves into the world, and hate-mongering was going to cease."

In the words of one teacher, in the months from January until June of 1972, "John Newton managed to keep everybody from going out of their minds."

One serious problem Newton faced at Longfellow was the peer pressure on black children not to achieve.

> Our black community has many people in it with high potential, the ability to compete. But there is this attitude in some parts of the black world that we all have to move forward in a group. There was intense pressure on the high-achieving black kid by his friends to hold back, the attitude that if you try to compete, you're a copout. If a black youngster has a lot of ability and shows signs of making it, he'll have this thing thrown back at him of "Hey, what you tryin' to do, be white?"

Newton said that there is plenty of peer pressure to compete in athletics, but that "black kids who don't perform well are put down. If a black kid misses a couple of shots on the basketball court, then it's, 'You punk'. It's not, 'You can do it man'. We have to make the kids feel they're good, and we have to support the kid without patronizing him."

Building self-esteem is an equally difficult problem with the girls, Newton said.

> If we want to make inroads in teaching youngsters, we start with the girls. Our black girls never get any flattery. So they take on the veneer of being tough. If I were teaching a K-3 school, I'd tell the girl you're pretty, ask her how was her weekend. Someone's got to tell her. The black kids get too much negativeness, not just from teachers, but from everybody—their friends, in the home. In schools we have a captive audience. Once we break through that feeling badly about oneself, we can change attitudes. You can build black pride without cutting other people down to make yourself feel taller. I touch kids. Sometimes I'm not aware I'm doing it. Maybe it's my need as well as theirs. I try to make them happy. I spank 'em with love. But if I have to do it, I call in the teacher and say don't make me do your dirty work for you, you love this child. You take some time with him.

Newton's leadership fostered a new life in many of Longfellow's classrooms. One teacher, who had such a classroom, describes the experience. The accuracy of her description is attested to by the fellow teachers who knew her, and the parents of her children.

> The children in my classroom were never fourth- or fifth-graders. They were the children in Room 104. They were tremendous, even though they were pawns in adult ego battles. We got along beautifully together because we did all kinds of ungraded, creative problem-solving things which children could address themselves to regardless of previous experience. The color of their skin was something we capitalized on. If you happened to have certain ethnic qualities that were special, that you could bring to any given situation, that was great. Each child was encouraged to perform at his highest level of ability. The children who reached a peak of performance were there as peer examples for other children to emulate. They loved each other. When they went out onto the playground, they stayed together, my black children, my white children, my Asian children. When they chose to be together this way, I knew we had integrated.

In those turbulent days, Room 104 was an island, one of the smallest in the Berkeley archipelago.

Straightening Out. Robert Newell, a black man who succeeded Newton as principal, had his critics, but even the staff member who declared, "I wish the principal would go away," conceded that things continued to improve after he arrived.

Newell spent a lot of time walking in the corridors and the playground, and he could chase after a fourth-grader about to play hooky if necessary. He had a quiet manner and informal way of dressing. His desk was usually

a clutter of papers and the briefcase on the floor beside his desk was stuffed so full that it couldn't be closed. Newell was aware that some of the staff thought he came on rather strong with a faculty that had been roughed up considerably by constant changes in leadership and direction. Newell impressed me as a man in the middle, squeezed between a central administration he felt was too removed from the schools and many teachers who were apprehensive about his announced intention to fire a few incompetent teachers.

Dan Dean, a guidance counsellor who had weathered all the principals since desegregation, said that Newell was handicapped when he came because "anybody who attempted to exercise authority would meet with resistance." Nevertheless, Dean reported, two days after he took over, the new principal met with a black militant teacher who had generated much ill feeling, and the teacher decided to leave.

Newell had more in common with his teachers than many of them suspected. He did not have a high opinion of the Board of Education, for instance, because of what he felt was intrusion into the affairs of individual schools without being adequately informed about them—at the same time it was neglecting its responsibility to make sure the business affairs of the district were being efficiently managed. He said neither the Board nor the Superintendent's office had much contact with the principals: the Superintendent communicated with them by handing down policy directives through his assistant superintendents.

"We were always hearing about a budget crisis," Newell remarked. "But somehow the administration would find the money at the last possible moment. This created a tendency of the teachers to see these crises as fabrications, like the oil shortage. The Board also made a habit of telling the teachers that if they wanted a raise, it would necessitate firing teachers and cutting back on supplies. This just increased the teachers' distrust of the administration because they have seen too many extravagances, too much money going into administration. This is why the teachers wanted an outside audit of school finances."

Newell was candid about Longfellow's shortcomings. "What we have here so far is desegregation, not integration." He sounded as dissatisfied as his teachers on this score, pointing out that of more than 800 students, almost half were below reading grade, 80 percent of them black children.

"The black kids know they're not doing well," he said. "As they look around, it's obvious the achievers don't look like them. In the old segregated schools at least the kids could see that the high achievers were also black. They don't understand why they're not doing better, why most of them don't get into the high potential classes. So sometimes there's name-calling because the black kids now find another minority [Asians] that's getting ahead."

The principal attempted to cope with the situation by emphasizing the importance of progress in the basic skills. He was willing to accept any teaching style that produced results.

But concentration on basic skills should not mean neglect of the normal achievers:

> That's a big problem. How does a teacher deal with a class of youngsters below grade level who are mainly black and still meet the needs of white or Asian kids who are achieving at grade level or above? Most teacher training institutions have not equipped teachers to deal with this problem. I find classes where the teachers teach to a very few youngsters, the ones who can have a verbal exchange with them. In other classes these verbal kids get little attention from teachers who are preoccupied with the underachievers.

Newell believed that the staff had made progress in meeting the needs of every type of child. "By and large it's an excellent staff. Many teachers are giving more individual instruction and appear less tense. They are relating better to each other across racial lines—the cliques are breaking down because they are sharing ideas with each other."

He acknowledged that the teachers who retreat into the classroom have a point. "The thing is a vicious circle. If kids are racing down the hall and a strange teacher asks them to stop, there may be an unpleasant exchange—'You're not my teacher'—that sort of thing."

The mention of kids racing in hallways reminded Newell that he ought to be taking a stroll around the school. He kept talking on his way out. "We don't have schools within schools here—no islands, no compartments—even though we have cooperative, self-contained units. We have team teaching, and the units are located near each other, so that the teachers can plan things jointly. We try to prevent things from becoming too tightly-knit by having faculty meetings by grade level for the whole school, so that the teachers can all come together."

As the children hurtled down the hallways, they decelerated rapidly when they spotted the principal. Newell was talking about how hard it is to get rid of a poor teacher. He considered himself lucky that he was able to fire one, in view of the difficulty of documenting the case against him.

> The process takes forever, and the kids lose out while you're trying to build the case. And of course the administrator's relationship with the teachers suffers. You have to show that you've made a real effort to help the teacher, but this is very difficult when the teacher realizes he is regarded as failing. The teacher knows that you have to meet many deadlines in preparing the case, most of them coming early in the school year, so the teacher becomes more and more defensive, and the

> teaching becomes worse and worse. The other teachers are very ambivalent about such a procedure. On the one hand they may resent the teacher, but they eventually close ranks. No teacher is willing to put anything unfavorable in writing, even though they may run around all day complaining about such and such a teacher. It's frustrating, and in the end you wonder if the firing is all worth it. But I'd rather have the teachers fight the administrator on something like this than fighting each other, the way they did when the staff was polarized along racial lines.

By this time Newell was on the playground, a half block of asphalt and he had caught sight of two youngsters making their way down the street towards Sacramento Avenue. They had already seen him, and by the time he called, they had turned around and were walking towards us. When they were back on the playground, Newell asked them if they had lost their way. Getting no answer, he pointed toward the schoolhouse.

Coming Together. During this period, from 1973 to 1975, Longfellow is healing itself.

The bureaucracy doesn't have much space here. Inside the main doorway are the desks of two clerk typists and the entrance to a small cubicle inhabited by the vice-principal. His door is constantly opening and closing.

At the far end of the reception area is the entrance to the school itself. When this door opens, a puff of noise floats over the heads of the typists, and gradually dissolves like a smoke ring. In contrast to the schools of New York City and other major urban centers, the schools of Berkeley are easy of access to outside observers. All a visitor has to do is sign a visitors' book and go on in. Teachers and children are used to strangers in the hallways. A word to the teacher before class is sufficient to enter her classroom. One simply opens the classroom door and walks in. If the class is in session, an exchange of nods with the teacher will do. Each classroom has a different personality, physical arrangement, and order of business.

In Carolyn Hall's fourth-grade class the desks have been pushed together in clusters of four to six, so that the children are looking at each other. In the morning there is a great deal of lively but subdued conversation. Of the 27 children, a dozen are black, and there are two Chicanos. Ms. Hall is a black woman in her thirties, attractive, and a bit tired-looking. She has indicated beforehand that if I want to observe I can also help at the same time.

Ms. Hall is working with one small, fast reading group. Her assistant

teacher, a young Chinese woman, is patrolling the back of the room. When Ms. Hall wants more production and less talk, she says, "Get right on with it, please." She looks about her quite a bit, but doesn't comment, gets up and goes to the board to write out words, testing her group for vocabulary. It is easy to spot the quickest in her reading group, a dynamic black girl, because all the other children are competing against her.

In other parts of the room, some groups are inactive, some buzzing, some working on mimeographed sheets. One small boy is daydreaming, so I go over to him and get him started on his blanks. The sentences are to be filled in by selecting one of three word choices. Todd, after seeming a bit surprised, gets down to business and gets most of the sentences correct. One of the correct phrases is "sea urchin." Has he ever seen one? No. I draw one and tell him how it hurts when one steps on the prickly green spines. Another child, overhearing, locates a Webster's Dictionary with a drawing of a sea urchin, and the ring of conversation expands, becomes more animated. Todd jumps up, comes back with a *Time-Life* book on fish and opens it up to a double-page spread of drawings, in color, of all sorts of eels, rays and shellfish—and sea urchins. He proceeds to name every one of the 50 or so echinoderms. He then reads a book well above the reading level of materials he's been using in class, and he is obviously enjoying himself. The only word he stumbles over is "anemone." The 40 minutes go very fast.

Ms. Hall has been pleased about the way things are going. "We're trying," she says, "and changes are taking place. The kids work together, they're comfortable with each other. They're aware of the differences, yes. But they're doing a good learning job. We have diversity—reading and math levels go from first to ninth grade. So we group the children according to their ability in their subjects. And we try to do as much one-on-one instruction as we can."

Hall rubs her forehead.

The class is too large, 30 kids. It would be hard even if the class were homogeneous. The school is too large, but there are some advantages to size. We have some excellent music programs and other activities not possible in a smaller school. There's apt to be more talent in a large teaching body just as there's more talent in a large pupil population. Our class is not suffering from lack of motivation. If you look excited, they think it's a game. I work with parents, and one comes in every Monday. Most of them want to help. While they don't usually go to PTA meetings, they do come to parent conferences which I hold twice a year. We've not had too many psychological problems with the children. I call the parents if there's trouble or keep the children after

school. If the parents are not supportive of my keeping their children after school, I don't battle with them. I'm not going to stay after school with the children if the parents won't do their part.

Ms. Hall isn't willing to say yet how integration has affected the children who are getting into high school at this point, but she feels that things are going more smoothly every year at the elementary level.

We don't measure everything in terms of children being buddy-buddy, but in terms of feeling at ease with each other. In the early stages here there were many misconceptions in the children's minds about how they ought to relate with each other. I don't wonder, in view of the fact that the parents hadn't figured out these things either.

Reading is Ms. Hall's special concern.

If we have a bad reading period, sometimes we stop to talk about it. My groups are balanced between boys and girls. And once in a while we have a whole class lesson, all groups combined, to test our cohesiveness. This is a time when everybody can help each other. Every ten days I reward a group by letting them sit in one of our alcoves. The children remind each other to keep quiet. "Teacher's talking" they'll say. If a child has finished his lesson, I give him more to do. I don't like to exploit a child by getting him to spend a lot of time helping others. But every child who does understand, who's on top of things, somehow seems to find someone who doesn't.

Ms. Hall is disappointed that many of the children will be moving away before the year ends, and she longs for a class of 25 rather than 30, and more reading materials. And carpets on the floors to reduce the noise level.

In addition to teaching, Ms. Hall runs an in-service workshop, in which teachers volunteer to engage in self-criticism. Their classroom performances are recorded on videotape, and then a group of teachers, guided by Ms. Hall, review the videotapes—their comments are candid. Close attention is paid to the response of the teacher to the child, since it usually determines what the child will do next. Questions are asked. Does the teacher make use of the child's experience? How much time is devoted to behavior problems? To listening? To reading? How does a teacher sustain interest, extend the range of discussion? Does the teacher spend much more time with some children than with others?

Judy Gershenson teaches fourth grade. She changes the seating pattern of her pupils from time to time. One year she had the desks arranged in the traditional manner, tight rows at right angles to the front blackboard. Now the desks are arranged in three long rows running across the room, with

no space between desk tops. Ms. Gershenson, a slim white woman in her early thirties with shoulder-length hair, barelegged, is wearing a blue denim blouse and skirt. The children begin quietly, giving the teacher their attention while she talks in a matter-of-fact way about the results of a story writing contest. When she hands out two miniature cars as prizes, the children crowd around to look, then quickly return to their seats. The first exercise is the alphabetical placement of words as they would appear in a dictionary. Responses are quick, and usually correct, from most of the children.

Ms. Gershenson speaks as if she is conversing with adults. Something is "relatively simple." She tells the children to "participate." Her wall posters are also adult. One announces that "A friend is someone who leaves you with all your freedom intact but who by what he thinks of you obliges you to be fully what you are." Other wall communications are less of a strain on the imagination. One is a proclamation of "LONGFELLOW KID POWER." A lifesize Halloween-green skeleton hangs above the pencil sharpener. The room is fairly bare, not overstuffed with projects, and despite the size of the class, there is a fair amount of empty floor space. An alcove at the side of the room is set aside for special group activities. One girl is playing with her Wacky Pack cards, and several of the desks are plastered with Wacky Pack stickers. The arrangement of words goes on: *height, hermit, heroine; electric, elegant, elementary, elephant.*

Ms. Gershenson distributes work sheets to the class. They are also dictionary placement tests. Then she goes to the back of the room, her observation post. At this point, Derek, a Japanese child, drags his desk over to me, all the way from the row in the front of the room. He produces a reader and a work book. Derek reads steadily, slowly, dealing the words out like playing cards. Occasionally he looks up and talks about his dog. He has understood that when a visitor comes to class, the teacher likes to put them to work at something useful. Ten minutes before the end of class, everybody plays games—dominoes, Parcheesi, dice with letters on them. On one side of the room five white children are playing scrabble.

"There have been subtle differences taking place as a result of integration," Ms. Gershenson says afterwards. "There had to be constant vigilance to keep things going right. But the problem is lessening, although it's not all gone. The first year black kids didn't participate so much in discussions. Now they do so quite freely. There is self-segregation on the playground and in games, but it's unconscious, not vindictive."

Ms. Gershenson says her children rarely fight. The noise level rises as the day goes on, there is lots of chatter. If the pencils are sharpened and on their desks, they get started right away. She has not asked too much of

parents because she's not in the mood this year. She is frank about it—she rarely asks parents to help unless she's sure the parent isn't a fault-finder. More of the fault-finders, she says, tend to be the middle-class parents.

Only one or two children are absent each day, she says, which may be partly because the school is pretty good about checking absences. She thinks that in spite of the lack of materials (like other teachers she buys most of her supplies, except texts, out of her own pocket), the large classes, and the unlovely and uncomfortable building, the teachers are doing amazingly well.

Her present class is the first group that has been together all the way through school in integrated classes.

> The children are not socially integrated, but they have learned to live side by side. They sit where they want to sit. They help each other move. Yet there is still self-segregation. What's the reason? When you have a bright black and a bright white kid; they cooperate. In this room it's academic equality that counts. The black high-potential girls are with the white high-potential girls. As the kids come together academically, slowly, then they begin to build interesting relationships.

Although she appears to be low-keyed in the classroom, Ms. Gershenson says it isn't so.

> No, the kids see me as tense. Sometimes I'm organized to the hilt, but other times I'm disorganized. Why deny it? With kids this age, how things will go is a very personal matter. It may depend on how well you've slept the night before. I'm thankful for one thing. No one harasses me. It's like a lottery where the one whose ticket is chosen is the loser getting singled out for inspection. I hardly even talk to principals. Maybe a "Hi, how are you?" a couple times a month. If the kids don't complain and the parents don't complain, then the principals figure things are going okay. The nice thing here is that people leave you alone if you don't get in anybody's way.

If the school fails, Gershenson says, it will fail for the same reason it might have failed three or four years ago: "We have no supplies and no facilities. If you see anything besides a state textbook or blue ruled paper in this room, then I bought it."

The complaint about lack of money for the school comes up in conversation with almost every teacher, regardless of what the subject is to begin with. While Mary Spivey, sixth-grade teacher, thinks that Longfellow has made great strides regardless of what test scores show, she intimates that progress has been achieved by industrious and intelligent teachers in spite of the central administration.

"Berkeley spends far more per pupil than any other school system in the state," she says, "but the money is not filtering down into the schools. There's no understanding of teachers' needs. I once asked the superintendent to give each teacher a hundred dollars so that she could have money for supplies, without having to go through a lot of red tape. He told me he couldn't do it—it came down to the fact that he didn't trust the teachers."

The Board of Education shares responsibility for the situation, she claims.

The Board reacts mainly to pressure groups. It doesn't address itself to the practical matters of running what we have efficiently and intelligently. The Chairman of the Board rarely comes to meetings, and when he does, he sermonizes. With one exception we almost never see Board members in the schools. They seem to be either indifferent or hostile to the teachers, otherwise how can you explain their making crucial decisions in the summer, when many teachers are away. Teachers get shifted around like pawns without being consulted. Can you imagine a junior high history teacher coming back from Europe to find he has been assigned to teach electronics, with a closet for a classroom?

Ms. Spivey lights up, however, when she talks about her class.

You can't fool the kids. They're reacting to each other as people. It's like a society where two tribes meet for the first time. At the first meeting they're uptight. Now I walk in and see that the children aren't suspicious of each other. There is a community of children here. This is not to say that they don't have their own racial groups. They do, but it's a natural thing, and there's no defiance behind it. It's different than before integration. I taught at Franklin School for two years before coming here. There was a significant percentage of Chicano pupils, a few white, the rest black. To be a Chicano or white was to have your back up against the wall. I knew one white girl who had a very tough time psychologically—she was isolated and wasn't charming enough to be able to help herself out of the situation. My only hope was to protect that child.

But my first class, the year of integration, when John Matlin was principal, was a perfect class, the best of my life. Fabulous. This had been a black kids' school. It had gotten run-down. Some of the black kids resented it when they started bringing white kids in that they began to fix up the school. But we lived through it all right. I found I had a mad black scientist and a mad white scientist in the class—you know drawing lasers, rockets, bombs, etc.—and they were delighted to find

each other. Integrated mad scientists right off. I also had a black genius and a white genius who spoke the same jargon with each other. Then I had a kid who literally ran up the wall when he came in the room and he found a white kid who could run up the wall. They got together because they found they were the best kick ball players in school.

Those who are more interested in improving reading skills, like Josephine Adams, the school librarian, are not so happy. Ms. Adams presides over the library with a firm hand, but it isn't enough to keep down the noise level. She thinks the attitude of the children is good, but then, "they were never that bad." She is not disturbed that they tend to form their friendships within their own ethnic group because they do it naturally, out of shared experiences and interests. She is not sure, however that the reading of Longfellow children has improved in quality since integration. The black children have made some progress she says, but by sixth grade as many of them are in serious trouble as before, and the school alone cannot overcome their reading disabilities. In the process of concentrating on the underachievers, high achievers lose out. Because they can get along all right, they get less attention. The Caucasian children, a large percentage of whom come from rich cultural environments, perform well. The Asian children also read at high levels, which she attributes to the fact that they are "programmed" to learn by their parents.

Ms. Adams is disappointed that most of the children who check books out of the library are white, although a notable exception is a child of a mixed marriage who has "read every book in the library." She is also annoyed that the parents are not volunteering as they used to for library duty. At one time she had 25 mothers helping out, now there are only a dozen. Several of the white library mothers have taken their children out of school, and Adams has had only two black library mothers in the past six years, in spite of the fact that she knows of many black mothers who have the time to volunteer one or two hours a week. She reports that classroom teachers have been trying hard to encourage parents to encourage reading at home. Only with this stimulation is the reading achievement gap going to be lessened.

A New Beginning. Longfellow in the spring of 1978 was a very different place than it was ten years before when it was desegregated. The school was no longer bursting at the seams. Enrollment was down from a high of 1,200 to 750. The school had been broken down into mini-schools, each with a team of six teachers headed by a team leader. As at other 4–6 grade schools, a reading and math management system had been introduced

which required teachers to keep long and complicated checklists of how each pupil performed on a series of special tasks (The system is characterized by some teachers as another example of bureaucratic meddling which limits their own freedom to develop their own style of teaching.)

The most remarkable differences, however, were outlined by several teachers who in the past had had different opinions about the school. Carolyn Hall, whom I had observed when she was a teacher and is now the vice principal, commented that the staff had stabilized. "We have at least 15 teachers who have been here since integration," she said. "The school has a reputation for being safe now and having a good academic program. It's one reason why our enrollment is going up slightly now every year in contrast to most other schools. Everyone is reading better. The gap between black and white kids is still the same but everyone has moved forward. There are fewer and fewer kids coming in who are achieving at the pre-first-grade level."

Richard Broadhead, the school's most militant unionist, said essentially the same thing.

> There's a good feeling on the staff. They are sticking together. There's a fairly good program, although I don't like the reading management system. It requires an enormous amount of record-keeping, lots of time tied up in paperwork. If teachers actually did what the bureaucrats tell us to do there would not be any time for teaching, and my experience is that it has not made much difference with kids who are having a problem. But the school is doing okay. We've got a principal who doesn't lean on people.

Mary Spivey, who was also at Longfellow before it was desegregated, agreed. "The situation has been improving for the last three years, and the parents are more positive about the school." Judy Gershenson, now a team teaching leader, said she was impressed that the teachers are relating to each other so well, in spite of many changes in principals. "They enjoy each other. It's a together school now."

All of the teachers thought that one reason things were going well was that they had a principal who, according to Ms. Spivey, is low-key. "It looks like nothing's going on here, administratively speaking. The principal under-administrates. He doesn't think up silly things for us to do. He backs us up."

The principal in question was Astor Mizuhara, a Japanese-American who grew up not far from Longfellow. A small man with a goatee who dresses as informally as he talks, Mizuhara said that more than anything else he wanted to create a safe and happy environment in the school and to bring the teachers closer together.

Although the parents and the teachers thought he accomplished what he set out to do, the central administration, which has never given any indication that it really understood how important a good principal is to the survival of a school, had other plans for him. So Mizuhara didn't return in the fall of 1978. He was replaced by another principal who in turn was himself replaced a year later. This was standard procedure in a school system that shuffles principals around like police on a beat.

10 Mr. Wong's Garden

The Carpet and the Yard, 1978. Because of its location in a multi-ethnic neighborhood, the Washington School has always been a racially mixed school. But under the guidance of a principal who for some unaccountable reason was left in one place for more than a dozen years, it became a truly integrated school as well.

Other schools have playgrounds, but at Washington School—kindergarten through third grade—the children have what Principal Herbert Wong christened the Environmental Yard. It is the culmination of a ceaseless battle to turn back the tide of asphalt that seems to be overflowing the streets of Berkeley into all the playgrounds of the world. Instead of having to spend recess on a hot pavement in spring and fall, the children can wander over wooden bridges, peer into fishponds, and scoot in and out of bushes, small Monterey pines, incense cedars, redwoods, and liquid ambers. The Environmental Yard has to coexist with a certain amount of pavement, which Principal Wong admits is necessary for kids who want to careen around a bit and play kick ball. But the Yard, built with the help of Professor Robin Moore of the University of California's School of Environmental Design and some other university plant freaks, has been a refuge and a delight for the children as well as an obsession for the principal.

Principal Wong is a short, middle-aged man with bobbed hair who dresses as if he were about to go on a picnic. He has a way of manipulating the English language that only a hip, tuned-into-the-now-generation, Chinese-American with a Caucasian wife could invent. This groovy conversational style enables him to skate nimbly over a vast number of top-

ics, from Dixieland jazz (he has produced radio programs on popular music, including a three-hour soliloquy on his friend Duke Ellington) to the care and feeding of unhappy teachers.

He commences his observations about the school with references to the Environmental Yard and playgrounds generally. He is constantly looking for money and spare parts for the Yard in the absence of adequate financial support from the central administration. He is also put out because he has noticed that another K-3 school, Thousand Oaks, has dismantled a wooden play structure built several years ago by the parents. Not only were the structures, which lent a certain artistic tone to the school, removed, but the wooden planters and sandboxes are gone and the ponds have been covered over with asphalt. Why wasn't he notified? He could have used all the stuff. This is an example of island mentality, he thinks. Then there is the case of LeConte, another K-3 school, which has allowed a beautiful, heavy timbered climbing net and play structure to deteriorate—another parent effort gone down the drain. There's no help from the city on such things. Since the City Manager says he has to get legislation passed to get money for projects like the Environmental Yard, Principal Wong goes another route, by staging "superfestivals" to drum up interest in the Yard, which isn't just a place for kids, but is bigger than that—what he calls a "model of school-community interaction."

Because of the Yard, Washington has several interested non-graduates. In addition to the environmentalist from the University, Wong says he has some rather strange ducks calling him up to give suggestions, along with many letters. One regular caller is a lady named Blackbird, another is a man who says he is Ponderosa Pine. Blackbird says her scheme to commandeer some territory and convert it into a community food garden has the support of Berkeley's self-designated Minister of Ecology, the Rev. Dennis Kubie. Such a project fits right in with a secret ambition of Wong's to get rid of the portable classrooms on the school grounds, lift the asphalt and plant vegetables.

Principal Wong's concern about outer as well as inner weather is reflected in the personality of his school. It is an open, refreshing place to be, and Wong's characterization of himself as a "weird" administrator notwithstanding, it is a well-run and comparatively harmonious institution. Arlene Schlitt, a substitute teacher who has been around quite a bit in other Berkeley schools, says that Washington has "an absolutely superb staff . . . I have never found a bad teacher there. The credit goes to the principal. He stands up to pressure and he picked the teachers."

The staff at Washington seems to be quite aware of what a good deal they have, the proof being that the school has a very low teacher turnover. Besides speaking well of their principal, who has been at the school

since 1965, the teachers also appreciate the fact that an active group of black and white parents led by a black mother, Sherryl Hancock, are participating in school affairs without pushing the principal or the teaching staff out of shape.

Another quality of the school which appeals to teachers is that it germinates new ideas. Washington has been a center for the development of new educational materials and teaching techniques. It was in Washington, one of the University of California's laboratory schools, where Professor Robert Karplus tested and improved his Science Curriculum Improvement Studies (SCIS), which feature simple experiments with objects, systems, chemicals and organic materials to see what makes them work or break down. Some teachers have adopted the expensive DISTAR reading program which employs a phonetic approach to word pronunciation. And in addition to its conventional grades, the school has a number of ungraded classes taught by teams of as many as three teachers. One team that uses the DISTAR program has brought all of its children up to grade level in reading.

The basic design of most of the classrooms is somewhat like an Etruscan house, with cubicles or alcoves around the edges of the room and an atrium in the center—the atrium, in this case, being a carpet big enough for everybody to sit on. The room design provides recesses into which one child or a small group can withdraw to concentrate on a special project, or simply talk; and a meeting ground at the center where the children become part of a single unit, where they circulate rumors, get instructions, pinch and lean against each other, compete or remain anonymous, give wrong answers without being singled out, act silly, and get within touching distance of the teachers.

Whether the alcove and the atrium are put to good use depends upon the teacher's sense of when a change of pace is needed, when to have letdowns, when to start things up again. With classes of 29 or 30 children, many of them ungraded, Washington teachers have developed the business of altering places and rhythms into a fine art.

Often, of course, things don't work out according to plan. On a cold January day for instance, Pearline Shannon is not having an easy time with a class of a dozen seven- and eight-year-olds. The room is full of portraits of famous black people, with captions written by the children. Martin Luther King, Ralph Bunche, Jackie Robinson, Marian Anderson, George Washington Carver, Harriet Tubman, Alexander Henson, Thurgood Marshall and Frederick Douglass. Missing, surprisingly is Muhammed Ali. (In no rooms are there pictures of Black Panthers Eldridge Cleaver or Huey Newton.)

Ms. Shannon, a black, middle-aged woman wearing a white blouse with

red slacks, moves from desk to desk. Most of her sentences are questions. All of the black children are well groomed. The one unkempt child is a very tired looking white boy with brittle hair and red eyes, who will probably be labeled a few years from now by his classmates as a hippie. Whatever group the teacher is concentrating on seems to be buckling down to the task at hand, but the moment she sits down at a table with one reading group, she has to divide her attention, looking at the rest of the class through a mental rear vision mirror, occasionally tossing over her shoulder, "How's it going, Ricky?" "I'm very concerned about what's happening over there, Jonas." "Trent, get back to your own table."

The room is overflowing with short attention spans. Amid the socializing and subdued commotion, the teacher is flashing word cards, reading and being read to, an indication that the teacher and the children have developed a capacity for tuning out extraneous noise. The most absorbed of all is a Chinese boy whose feelings are rippling across his face as he follows the story in his book. When he reads aloud, he does so very deliberately, each word taking stage center.

After class, Ms. Shannon confirms the obvious, that there is a great gap in the children's reading achievement. Some children read at first-grade level, others are reading at fourth-grade level. When she gets a very slow reader, Ms. Shannon tries to get the parent to hold the child back a year—"Some kids just take a longer time to get started." But many parents, particularly the black parents, are reluctant to do this she says, taking the suggestion as a slight to the child. "The child pays heavily for this type of thinking, maybe for the rest of his life."

Substitute Marilyn Potter's class of six-, seven- and eight-year-olds illustrates some of the difficulties of breaking down into units a class of very dissimilar children, regrouping them from time to time, and reassembling them as a whole again. I encounter her outside where she is watching her children racing all over the schoolyard in little knots, as if they were tied together. The rain that is cutting the recess short means that she will have to cope with a lot of unexpended nervous energy when she gets inside. Once the children had gotten their coats off she has them sit on the central carpet for a calming-down session, which begins with a request to "Fold your arms, cross your legs, and look at me." Then come the instructions: "Get your materials, get your name cards and put them in the slot of the learning station where you are going to work. When you are finished return your materials to the proper place and put your name cards back in where they belong."

Except for the carpet area, the whole room seems to be divided into learning stations. Of the 20 stations, many are simply boxes of teaching

materials. After the children have settled down in these stations they work with varying degrees of intensity. One boy, who is supposed to be completing sentences on a ditto, is doing pushups. The teacher is taking pains to check on each child's progress. Every child has a folder for his math and reading papers, and she checks each learning station card to be sure the child has been to the right ones. A library chart in the corner records the stories each child has read. Also helping to keep track of things is a compensatory education aide and, sometimes, a parent.

When the teacher tells me that some of the children read at fifth-grade level, others at first-grade level, questions arise about this type of classroom organization. In this setting, how can a teacher deal with the needs of three age groups, of children of vastly different backgrounds? Some of the nooks are so isolated that the teacher can't see into them from across the room. When the children are all together on the carpet they are more attentive and responsive. There they seem to reach the pitch of excitement that I associate with some of the Catholic elementary schools on New York's Manhattan West Side—classes just as varied racially and culturally as any in Berkeley.

The creation of small, changing communities of children in a single room, the construction of cubicles and a central "park" where children cal alternate between being private and public individuals, the merging of inner and outer environments by the use of plants and pets—all these practices are not peculiar to Washington School. I've seen similar methods of grouping and room organization in one-room rural schoolhouses in Colorado, Illinois and Maine—and, where the teacher has been skillful and sensitive, with good results.

But Washington is different simply because, like any school, it has its own personality. The psychological mind-set of its teachers is unique. They tend to be more self-conscious in doing certain things that teachers in other communities might do almost automatically. In some cases, this self-consciousness on the part of the teachers may be inhibiting and destructive of spontaneity, but a teaching staff which is constantly engaging in self-interrogation tends to be more imaginative, more open to suggestion, and able to improvise more effectively. Washington teachers give the impression of being stimulated by the wide range of their pupils' capabilities and by an artlessness in the children that has not yet been overwhelmed by the apprehensions of their parents. The children—black, Asian, Chicano and Caucasian—are encouraged to reveal things about their own lives which are special, not to put one another down as a way of elevating themselves. When confrontations do occur, the children are asked to analyze them.

The compensatory education instructional aides and parent volunteers are essential. The parent, working with the children on the outer fringes or joining with the teacher in the group meetings on the carpet, has a double function. She is an alternative to a teacher who is occupied elsewhere. At the same time, because she is a parent—often black—the children are aware of an adult consensus in the room. The parent volunteers provide another kind of reassurance to the children—a visible evidence of the importance of the school to the family.

The socialization process, the educator's term for making friends, goes on all the time. Its most obvious manifestations are on the playground. The Environmental Yard promotes a somewhat different style of getting acquainted. At other schools, the huge expanses of asphalt mean that interpersonal associations are mainly in the form of games, group activities of a competitive nature. Washington's patch of pavement is too small to accommodate much of this type of activity, which means that groups are smaller, and more numerous. The Environmental Yard encourages the formation of twosomes and threesomes. The Yard also offers a different way of getting acquainted: there may be a particular tree, plant or frog in a pond that may catch the interest of one or two children, and the common inspection of the day-to-day development of these living organisms may form the first bond of friendship between them.

In the same way, inside, a small group of children may "adopt" a pet, a collection of bulbs or a goldfish, and share the responsibility for keeping them alive and well. The principal's stress on the natural environment in and out of the classroom is not only a way of stimulating learning, but also a means of developing relationships based on common interests which transcend race or culture. A common interest in music, painting or acting has the potential for bringing children of diverse backgrounds together where differences in academic achievement do not prevent them from sharing a common aesthetic experience. In the classroom the pets and plants form a living company of which all the children are a part.

In every classroom the children reside in the midst of two different landscapes: a living one, made up of growing things, and an imaginary or abstract one, composed of paintings, collages, constructions, photographs, poetry inscribed on blackboards with colored chalk. The landscapes are very much of the children's lives, particularly when they have a part in creating and changing them.

Poems. Logically, considering the fact that Berkeley has a soft place in its heart for fine old things such as houses and trees, the story of Washington School should have a happy ending. But in the Berkeley public school system, the rules of logic do not always apply. In the spring of 1978,

because the administration wanted more room for the high school, it was talking about taking over Washington, just across the way, scattering the teachers, children, and the Environmental Yard to the winds. The school was, in short, a convenient piece of real estate. It turned out that the school was given a temporary reprieve, but not for long.[1]

The fact that its dissolution was even seriously contemplated reflected something about the priorities of the people who were directing the school system. If nobody else got the message, the teachers did. To them it was a sign that a precious community of learning, built up over a dozen years, without any counterpart in Berkeley history, was valued so little that it could be closed overnight and converted into a building annex.

Such an attitude didn't surprise Principal Wong and his teachers. They had felt for a long time that the uniqueness of the school and the independent spirit of its faculty (to preserve some school programs they had once offered a list of administrative positions that could be cut out of the budget) had not endeared them to the central administration and the Board. The habit of resisting bureaucratic practices which they felt threatened the creative spirit of the school had made the principal and faculty unpopular with the upper echelons.

One teacher, reflecting the attitude of many at the time, put it this way:

> The administration has completely transformed its relationship to the teachers. Now everything is handled like a labor management problem. The administration sees itself as a management team, telling us what to do every inch of the way, supplying us more and more forms to fill out and inventing checklists; putting the children into slots and having us lead them along step by step through the checklists.

Finally, just before school closed for the summer, Principal Wong resigned. A few days earlier he had told me: "The administration says I don't understand the science of management. I'm not a manager, I'm a principal, and there is a difference. Around here management science is the science of checking up on people. A principal has to nurture a human community."

He paused. "The other day an administrator asked me what has the Environmental Yard got to do with education in Berkeley. I typed out an explanation. He didn't even read it."

One afternoon in the middle of May, after school was out, I went back to Washington to take a last look around before summer, and I came across some poems, tacked up on a bulletin board, that the children had written about what the yard had meant to them. I copied down three of them in my notebook:

[1]High school students now occupy the second floor of the school.

I see the pond
I see fish in the pond
I see the waters wave
I see the straight rocks
I see people walking down the street
I see you and me
I see the flies
I see the tall trees
Vincent

When we were out here in the Yard
I saw a black beetle.
I picked it up and
Held it in my hand.
Then it went up my sleeve
Now I can't get it out.
Arcellius

Blossoms come and
Blossoms fall the
Rain carries down and
washes them all.
This is the truth
And I'm telling
you why the sun
comes down and
plays them a song.
Sinae

Afterwards I went for a walk in the Yard. This is what I saw. Ponds where the fish were so lively that it looked like rain was falling. Long fences, redwood groves with some trees 20 feet high, willows and rushes, maples, bamboo, play structures, picnic tables, daisies, cactus, ceanothus, eucalyptus, poppies, shed with tools and fertilizers, and a child contemplating an earthworm.

11 The Politics of Education

A Misleading Report. In late August, 1976, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights released a report on the progress of desegregation programs in American public schools. One section of the report dealt with Berkeley. It concluded that "strong leadership exerted successively by several superintendents and the school boards plus community participation were critical elements in the peaceful implementation of Berkeley desegregation plans of 1964 and 1968." The report also stated that the quality of education was improved and that there were a few, if any, complaints of violence in the Berkeley schools during the implementation of desegregation.

The Commission's report did not help its credibility with Berkeley citizens because these statements were false.

How the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights had arrived at its rosy view of the Berkeley school situation was a mystery. In two days of public hearings in the city, it had had plenty of testimony along the lines offered by Carol Sibley, the chairman of the school board which had led the campaign for school desegregation.

"It was not a failure," was the most Ms. Sibley could say about the experiment. "What hampered our forward progress was a new self-segregation by the teaching staff and students, and a new militancy which was expressed in 'Hate Whitey' essays posted on bulletin boards." She said that the school district's failure to put a stop to this racism "was a mistake. We should have clamped down on this, but we were all afraid of being called the worst thing you could ever be called at that time: a racist. We were cowards."

Other statements at the hearing reflected little credit on the leadership of the Berkeley schools. Jimmie Harold, the black student body president of Berkeley High School, and Julie Sherman, a member of the high school Senate, raised questions about the implementation of desegregation. His school had "the same black and white problem," Harold said—and he referred to the federally funded Experimental Schools Program—which drew off a third of Berkeley's 15,000 student population for the common schools, as a "way of increasing the separation of the races."

Ms. Sherman said flatly that integration hadn't worked, "I wouldn't want to put anyone through what I went through."

These statements by no means gave a full picture. Desegregation had worked out well for thousands of children, expanding their social environment and bringing them into contact with new friends, teachers, ideas. But for many children, it hadn't worked at all. Hundreds of parents, white and black, had decided to transfer their children into private schools or into other public schools or into other public school districts. It was a one-way migration.

The reasons for the withdrawals did not become apparent until December 1973 when Foster's successor as superintendent, Laval Wilson, alarmed by the shocking decline in enrollment—1,600 in the previous two years—invited parents who had pulled their children out of the schools to meet with him to discuss the matter. What they told the superintendent was what teachers and parents had been trying to tell the Board of Education for years. Some classrooms were in total disorder, children were being forcibly shaken down for their lunch money and personal possessions, some teachers were doing little to prevent beatings or punish bullies, academic standards were being lowered, and racism was being condoned, even encouraged.

"It's hard for me to admit this, but most of the trouble is caused by a few black students," said one black parent who took three children out of school. "The teachers seem to say to the blacks, 'We understand. We know about the cultural reasons and the conditions in the home that cause you to do this and it's all right.'" The parent said this had given rise to a double standard for discipline.

A parent from a mixed marriage reported that his son, whom he had put in a private school after being robbed three times, "came home from his new school and was amazed that he had been bumped into by a black child and the black child had said 'Excuse me.'" The parent concluded by saying, "We've gone through all this hell for integration but, you know, we're raising a whole new generation of bigots."

To make matters worse, the school district was facing a financial crisis of major proportions. To stave off a budget deficit of nearly $4 million,

which threatened to become larger in future years as enrollment declined, the Board had had to give dismissal notices to 50 teachers with the prospect of having to fire more soon. Coming after a six-weeks' teachers strike in the fall of 1975, the firings, salary freezes and cutbacks in educational programs had so inflamed relationships between teachers and the administration that many of their disputes appeared headed for the courts.

How had such a situation come about in a community whose public schools have had many advantages over other California school districts? Despite the large amount of tax-exempt property owned by the University of California and other private educational institutions in Berkeley, the city has a large and diversified tax base. Berkeley's per pupil expenditure has been higher than any other municipality in the state, including such wealthy communities as Palo Alto and Pasadena. The school administration has had at its disposal many of the intellectual resources of the University, which it has used in setting up laboratory schools, and Berkeley has always had a superior corps of teachers.

So, how does one explain the waves of discontent with public schools at just the time they were trying, with the support of the general community, to integrate their classrooms?

The answer seems to be that in this critical period the Berkeley schools experienced a failure in leadership. This failure of leadership was not confined to the Board of Education or the professional administration of the district. It was also a failure of the liberal community which dominated the city's political structure.

The "strong leadership" cited by the Commission was certainly not apparent to parents or teaching staff during these years. Despite his creditable performance in selling the idea of school desegregation, Superintendent Neil Sullivan had unexpectedly taken a job in Massachusetts on the very eve of the implementation of the desegregation plan—an act which constituted "running out" on his responsibilities in the opinion of many parents, teachers and principals. Before his successor, Richard Foster, resigned after six stormy years, he was being roundly condemned by many teachers and parents as having been ineffective.

One of the most serious charges leveled at Foster by his critics was that he pursued educational and personnel policies which exacerbated racial tensions. Foster gave principals and teachers the feeling that the interests of white, middle-class students would be subordinated to the educational welfare of minority children, thereby implying that the two groups were in competition with one another.

Bad feelings increased when Foster initiated an affirmative action hiring policy which placed more emphasis on discriminating against white applicants for teaching positions than it did on vigorous nationwide recruiting

of minority applicants who could be accepted on their merits as professional without preferential treatment. His approach was supported by black militant Board member Hazaiah Williams.

At Williams' insistence, Jesse Anthony, a music teacher and prominent member of Williams' church, was appointed chairman of the district's affirmative action committees. Anthony asked that the district in considering candidates for teaching positions should disregard all qualifications except the applicant's racial or ethnic background.

Two years later the affirmative action committee, of which Anthony was still a member, presented the Board another plan that would require the district to establish racial quotas so that the composition of the district's adult employee staff should reflect the percentages by race of the student population. The committee also recommended that hiring be done solely on the basis of oral interviews slanted towards "minority goals," supplemented by a "job-related" written test graded on a pass-fail basis. Finally the committee demanded elimination of the seniority system, so that newly-hired minority teachers might be retained while white teachers with seniority could be fired.

The Board expressed doubts about the workability of the proposals but not their moral implications. The achievement of the desired racial and sexual quotas, the Board felt, would complicate the job of administering the schools. The independent agency suggested by the affirmative action committee to enforce compliance with its race quota policies might undermine the Board's own authority, and bypassing the seniority system might be challenged in court because it seemed to conflict with state law.

It appeared that the affirmative action policies suggested to the Board had been in effect informally for some time. Beatrice Tobias, a white woman with an MA in biology and ten years teaching experience in the Bay Area learned about the hiring policies first-hand. When Ms. Tobias applied for a teaching position in 1970 and again in 1972, she was told she could not be considered for appointment. While she was waiting to ask for an interview "a Caucasian applicant came in the room and was told there were no openings. When a black came in she was handed an application form."

When she remonstrated with Superintendent Foster, she recalled, "he told me that to hire a white teacher they had to show cause."

The Financial Crisis. Another example of the failure of the Board and the central administration to supply leadership was their tendency to get involved in flashy but irrelevant issues. During the delicate transition period from 1968 to 1975 the Board allowed its attention to be absorbed by

matters not nearly so important as making desegregation work, improving the quality of education, and the bolstering of teacher morale. Numerous anxiety-producing experiments were devised, half-implemented and frequently dropped. At the same time the school administration was neglecting to monitor closely the financial operations of the schools, the Board was issuing directives which teachers viewed as uninformed and meddlesome, such as a new "users" method of rating teachers based on evaluations by pupils and parents as well as supervisors. The vague guidelines of the program were so confusing that the idea was abandoned.

Behind much of the meddling seemed to be a distrust of teachers and principals. On one occasion the Board demanded that the principals parade before a public meeting and vow that they would guarantee one year's educational growth for every year a child was in school, a promise the principals knew very well they couldn't keep. That experience, in the words of one of the principals, was "humiliating beyond belief."

Also, the Board displayed an affinity for ideological controversies which built up mountains of ill-will. On one occasion the Board told teachers to indoctrinate their students on the illegitimacy of the Vietnam War—a directive which the American Civil Liberties Union strenuously opposed.[1] To advance the rights of young people, the Board directed that high school students be allowed to use the faculty toilets, a move which found little favor with either the students or faculty and was never implemented. After D'Army Bailey, the black city council member who was later recalled, declared that Abraham Lincoln was "a figure of increasing irrelevance to black children," the Board changed the name Lincoln School to Malcolm X. The cause of academic freedom was invoked by one Board member to defend the showing of a hard-core pornography film in a Berkeley high classroom. This member, hostile to the police, was able to convince a majority of the Board to ban the circulation in the lower grades of a "coloring book" intended to put police in a favorable light by explaining their services to the community. The Board ventured further afield when it debated at length a resolution favoring the city's controversial installation of traffic barriers. The proposal was narrowly defeated.

Meanwhile, the Berkeley Unified School District was following policies which were to bring it to the brink of financial disaster. At just the time when the desegregation of the schools was getting underway, the district's proposal writers asked for and received a grant of $6 million for a system

[1]In April 1981 the Board voted to include information on the selective service system and draft resistance as part of a compulsory high school course. Declared one Board member: "It seems to me that President Reagan never learned the tragic lesson of Vietnam . . . The Board's resolution is appropriate considering Berkeley's history of opposition to militarism."

of new schools which would draw almost a third of the city's 15,000 school children into what the Board described as "alternative" education centers—an Experimental Schools Program (ESP).

The Board supported these "alternative" schools in spite of a warning by the chairperson of the Citizen's Budget and Finance Committee that "if the Board approves this proposal . . . it will be making a major policy commitment and programmatic decision binding new Board members and covering the five-year duration of the grant. Approval of the proposal will represent the high water mark in a sustained pattern of non-management and non-planning which seems to characterize the Berkeley schools' top administration."

The chairperson's warning was duly noted, filed and forgotten. So little thought had been put into the planning of these experimental schools that both the Board and the administration spent much of their time for the next five years trying to figure out what the schools should be doing and how to run them. The riddle was never solved.

What most of the 5,000 children enrolled in the ESP program got in the way of education was indicated by these excerpts from the report of the Department of Health Education and Welfare survey team:

> *Odyssey School:* Odyssey had three directors in the past year. The school's physical appearance certainly is not appealing. The temporary trailers are arranged around a mud puddle like a group of covered wagons around a campfire: a visitor almost looks around to see when the Indians will attack . . . a black girl—"I don't really like it at Odyssey. They just give you the credits and you don't learn anything here."
>
> *United Nations West:* It was very difficult there to find out what was going on . . . The site director said the school had 57 students. I saw just about a dozen wandering around. Some were playing cards, others were reading comic books . . . There was some question about the (teachers) commitment. A sign on the bulletin board said they would be fined if they kept coming to class so late . . . [A teacher] had an unusual view of reading problems. Dyslexia, he said, was simply a form of laziness which would go away if students concentrated. Another teacher spoke admiringly about the student newspaper BAD [Black and Determined], but when he tried to produce one he found it hadn't been published this year.
>
> *Genesis:* The high school version of Kilimanjaro (an experimental elementary school) for white freaks. There was not a black face in the Genesis class I saw . . . Genesis seems perfectly typified by a white

boy with long hair and a vest sitting in class barefoot balancing a red, white and blue beachball on his toe.[2]

With Board support, Superintendent Foster established two ESP schools, one Black House, for black students only, and the other, Casa de la Raza, restricted to students of Mexican-American origin. When the Department of Health, Education and Welfare warned that the schools were "racially exclusive: and hence illegal," the Board resisted discontinuation of the schools, Foster declaring that it "is important to design particular programs to overcome the adverse effects of a society overcome by racism." The Board finally closed the schools to avoid having its ESP funds cut off.

Casa de la Raza and Black House were only the tip of the ESP iceberg. As the rest of the ESP schools developed, student populations of most of them became more and more segregated racially. Tensions increased because the faculties and students in the ESP schools were isolated from the common schools and as such became the focus of resentment by many teachers in the common schools who felt that the ESP schools were receiving special treatment.

The consequences of the district's preoccupation with the experimental schools soon became evident. Test scores indicated that black children as a group were not overcoming the gap that separated them from Caucasian and Asian children. Teachers and principals were having increased difficulty coordinating academic programs because of what they declared was a lack of direction. Despite the protests of the two teachers' unions and many individual teachers, the central administration purchased costly equipment while classroom teachers were buying needed classroom supplies out of their own pockets. The teachers' protests about overcrowded classrooms, inadequate buildings, and financial mismanagement at headquarters went unheeded.

The only Board member who occasionally listened to the teacher complaints about the central bureaucracy and its overspending was Louise Stoll, a small, bright, tough-minded, sometimes abrasive woman who had been elected with the support of the radical political movement.

By September 1973 Ms. Stoll was sounding more like a fiscal conservative than a left-winger. She attacked the proposed budget for the coming year as a "mindless document" that padded staffing at the expense of

[2]In the same report: "At the start of our visit Larry Wells [the first administrator of the experimental schools program] said, 'There was a sort of idealistic feeling that we would move in and wave our wand and all sorts of things would happen.' The report quoted William Thomas, budget director of the school system, as follows: "If I had my say, I'd send all the money back to Washington. It just creates problems."—Report of External Project Review Team, Berkeley Experimental School, December 1973.

supplies, maintenance and teachers' salaries. "The budget fails to address the fundamental needs of the district and abuses the youngsters it is meant to serve. The adoption of this budget constitutes an act of gross irresponsibility."

The Board majority's indifference to the district's financial problems continued until 1975. Despite more and more indications that the district was in fiscal trouble, the Board entered into contract negotiations with the teachers, finally offering them a slight increase in salary and fringe benefits. Only after the teachers had accepted the package did the Board finally see fit to appoint a Citizen's Fiscal and Review Committee to "ascertain the present solvency" of the school district.

The grim facts about school mismanagement stunned even those who had long suspected that something was wrong. On July 22, 1975, the citizen's committee submitted a report that concluded that the financial condition of the Berkeley Unified School District was "extremely serious and a direct product of egregiously bad business management practices."

After listing several instances of overspending and faulty business practices, the report concluded that by 1976 the district would be $5.567 million in the red: "In blunt terms, the Berkeley Unified School District is both technically bankrupt and in violation of state and county applicable laws and codes."

The immediate result of such disclosures was the abrupt resignation of the business manager. Another was the withdrawal by the Board of Education, in a state of shock, of an agreement to raise the salaries to teaching staff and a proposal to cut salaries instead. The Board's reneging on its salary offer led to a six-week teacher's strike in the fall with disastrous effects on the morale of teachers, pupils and parents from which the Berkeley schools have not yet recovered.

Violence Again. Another major failure in leadership was the refusal of the Board and the central administration to recognize, and deal effectively with violence in the schools.

If ever teachers and children needed a stable environment it was during the first years of desegregation. Informed and sympathetic leadership was doubly important for two reasons.

First, at the time teachers and students were being transferred to new and very different schools, the organization of these schools was being altered. (The K-6 schools were being replaced by K-3 and 4-6 schools) Some educators and, privately, at least one Board member had grave reservations about the educational soundness of this reorganization, reasoning that transferring a child to another school after the third grade was an unhealthy break in continuity at a critical point in the child's develop-

ment, detaching him from teachers who knew him well and launching him into an unfamiliar setting.

Second, Berkeley school children were living in a city that had been afflicted by outbreaks of mass violence centering around the University of California campus ever since the year of desegregation, 1968. Although few secondary-school students had participated in the riots of the late sixties and early seventies, teachers reported that the rioting had raised the children's anxiety levels. Apprehensions were increased when some groups of secondary-school students adopted the tactics of intimidation which the street demonstrators had used so effectively against the city and University administration. One early example of such attempted intimidation occurred at a Board of Education meeting in 1968 when the Berkeley High Black Students Union (BSU) threatened dire consequences if the superintendent did not fire teachers that the BSU had decided were racist or incompetent (a demand Superintendent Sullivan rejected).

Much of the violence was committed by a small number of black students whose behavior was certainly not typical of minority children. Although serious, overt acts of physical aggression involving blacks and white students were few in number, they were very disturbing when they were viewed as racial incidents. More upsetting was the day-to-day type of routine coercion of which teachers and parents were aware but were not publicized by the school administrators.

For the most part, the Board took the position that the violence was being exaggerated by overreacting parents and teachers, and that the press was guilty of sensationalizing isolated incidents. Some Board members seemed to think that statements of concern about the violence would be interpreted as racist thinking, despite the fact that many parents of minority children had been more supportive than many white parents of strict discipline in the classroom.

The black parents' worry over violence surfaced in a charge of the Berkeley High School PTA that the Board had shown too little concern over assaults, rapes, and widespread drug abuse on the high school campus. Even when advised of the seriousness of the situation by Clifford Wong, the high school principal, the Board maintained an air of detachment.

Matters came to a head when in January 1973 a black teacher, a white parent and six students went to the offices of the Berkeley *Gazette* to report that a high school teacher had been brutally beaten by two black students, who were subsequently released in the custody of their parents and were back in school a day or so later. The girl students said that conditions at the high school had gotten to the point where they were

afraid to go to the lavatory, using toilet facilities at a nearby department store and the YMCA instead. They also told of heavy gambling, knifings and beatings.

The black teacher, describing the prevalence of extortion, said, "You go down the hall, and a black dude will say, 'That's a nice watch you have there. Let me see it.' You say no and he'll say you better let me have it or I'll call my friends."

A short while after the beating, violence was brought closer to home when the son of a Board of Education member was severely beaten twice in a five-day period at the high school. Member Samuel Markowitz reported that a small band of youths was responsible for most of the violence, and he accused high school authorities of allowing them back in school almost immediately after they admitted committing criminal assaults. The result of this policy of lenience, Markowitz declared, was that parents were afraid to complain because of retaliation against their children.

"It's no secret," Markowitz said. "Most of the beatings involved blacks ganging up on whites." Statistics seemed to support his contention. From September to December the previous year, of 184 high school students suspended for fighting and smoking, 146 were black.

Other complaints followed, including a protest by the Berkeley Education Association, a teacher's union, charging that the district authorities had been "negligent in their duties in protecting the safety of students and teachers," and hinting at a possible strike if rules for safety were not "quickly adopted." The angriest protest came from the Berkeley High PTA in a letter of concern about the continuing violence in schools throughout the district.

"How many times in the past years our members have appeared before your body and presented their concerns, their pleas for some action, some direction from your body about the continuing problem of violence," the letter declared. "We expressed to you that the continuing permissive attitude of the district, the reluctance of anyone to set standards of conduct, . . . and the lack of a single standard being applied to all students impartially was leading the district into the situation it is now facing." The letter concluded by asking the Board to denounce all violence and publish a statement detailing "what is expected of each student with regard to attendance and behavior."

Despite the furor, the Board could not agree on what to do. In February, 1973 it approved by a 3–2 vote amid angry personal exchanges, a "policy" on violence which condemned violence and racism and named such crimes as "bodily harm to a member of the school community," arson, vandalism, extortion and possession and sale of drugs as grounds

for suspension or expulsion. However, students "should not normally be expelled" for drug use, profane or abusive language, smoking, truancy, tardiness or cutting classes. Committees of teachers, parents and students were to be set up and report to the Board.

Resolutions condemning violence, however, were not what the parents and teachers wanted. The various crimes and misdemeanors listed by the Board had been prohibited all along; what was needed was some action to enforce codes of behavior. Neither the Board nor the Superintendent conducted personal on-site investigations into the situation, nor did the administration intervene to see that the principals acted promptly and decisively to implement Board policies against violence.

New Directions. The beginnings of a change in the troubled atmosphere of the schools goes back to 1974, when the Board elected as Superintendent to succeed Dr. Foster a soft-spoken, black educator named Laval Wilson, who had been Superintendent of Schools in Bridgehampton, New York. The appointment was especially significant because he had been opposed by the black power militants led by Board of Education Member Reverend Williams.

Williams said of Wilson that "I would not compromise for a man, even a black man, who would teach children to read and write but who would impart no sense of how to seize power so that they can survive." The other black member, Mary Jane Johnson, echoed these sentiments, declaring, "I don't care whether they read or write so well as whether they stay alive. I need someone who can tell kids to pull together and teach them to beat the system."

Among those who responded publicly was the Reverend Harvey Swanson, of the North Berkeley Congregational Church, who urged his fellow citizens to recall both Williams and Johnson. "These two persons," he said, "have shown their complete disregard for the most important and basic duties of any Board—to provide a sound education for the children entrusted to them." Williams, he added was "utterly unworthy of being a minister."

The new Superintendent quickly proved to be his own man. Being black helped: he was impervious to the black militant's strategy of getting concessions from whites by threatening to put a racist label on them. Wilson announced that whereas in the past "decisions have been made on the basis of guesstimate, politics, and how many parents come to Board meetings, I want hard data."

This was encouraging to one Board member, James Guthrie. Elected a year after Wilson's appointment, Guthrie, a Professor of Education at the University of California with three children in the Berkeley schools, had

long ago lost patience with the district. He characterized as "scandalous" the fact that "one out of every five employees in the district is not involved with instruction" and that "anybody who's ever touched this district's payroll is on it for life."

Meanwhile, Guthrie charged, "students remain unchallenged, low-income children perform far below their capacity in reading and math . . . despite the fact that Berkeley spends more money per pupil and levies higher taxes than 90 percent of the districts in California and the nation." One big reason for the district's difficulties, Guthrie asserted, was that the city "plunges headlong into every experimental program that comes along . . . change for change sake . . . The school district has jumped at the federal bait, no matter whether it's suited to Berkeley's needs or not."

Before a year had passed, Superintendent Wilson presented some unpleasant facts. On March 17, 1976, he reported that in the almost eight years since desegregation, the school situation had deteriorated on every front. Wilson declared that (1) while coexisting, minority and white students were becoming more isolated from each other; (2) minority student test scores were lagging further and further behind the scores of white students; (3) there was fear, mistrust and misunderstanding in the schools and they were not considered safe; and (4) teachers were finding it impossible to reverse the downward trend, while parents were withdrawing from the problem.

A black ex-principal, Henry Dorsey, also did some plain speaking. More than three years after the Board adopted its resolution on violence, Dorsey—speaking as the school district's ombudsman responsible for "crisis prevention"—declared that black students were being allowed, in some cases encouraged, to terrorize white school children. Although the intimidation was the work of a small number of black students, Dorsey said their actions had threatened the success of desegregation. The "set-up" which had trapped many black youngsters into disruptive behavior, Dorsey said, was traceable to the "permissive attitudes" of parents and the failure of the school administration and teachers to take a stand.

"Many white parents are not prepared for desegregation psychologically," Dorsey commented. "They tell their children if there are confrontations, don't make waves . . . don't make trouble."[3] While emphasizing that most black parents were also distressed with the schools' disruptions,

[3]The theme that the white parents bore a heavy responsibility for violence in the schools was reiterated by white parents themselves. One white parent put it this way: "Violence in the schools came many years before desegregation. My daughter attended a K-6 school in the hills which was 99 percent white. She and her friends had to carry their lunch money in their shoes. When they wanted to go to the bathroom, they were afraid to go without an escort." She blamed the situation on white parents who neglected their children and allowed them to "run wild."

Dorsey accused some black parents of fanning racial resentment by reminding their children of past injustices, of instilling in them the "spirit of getting even."

"Such parental attitudes may be understandable," Dorsey said, "but it is not going to solve the tremendous problems of the future when blacks and whites will need each other, and it is not going to save the black youngsters who later run afoul of the law and lose out in career opportunities because of their misconduct . . . If the responsible adults do nothing, nothing can be done about it. The adult authority must be firm, must make it clear that there are sanctions against bad conduct, and be prepared to follow through in enforcing these sanctions."

Dorsey said the school district shared responsibility for the situation with the parents.

Although Dorsey did not specify in what way the district had fallen down, Sam Singer, the editor of the Berkeley High School newspaper was willing to do so. He called attention in one issue of the paper to the high school's black studies program which he said had racist overtones that were increasing tensions between black and white students. As an example of the type of literature which had the approval of Richard Navies, the black studies program director, Singer cited the following poems from a book (for which Navies had written an admiring comment) written by a teacher associated with the black studies program:

> Green grass, green grass, kept so nice . . .
> I bet you didn't know that you and black folks are a lot alike.
> You see we are well kept too
> Though your gardener is a Jap . . .
> We are often clipped by a Jew.

And:

> Our father who art in prison . . .
> Give us this day our daily bread . . .
> And keep the pigs from beatin' us in the head . . .
> Let us kill those who trust (sic) pass against us
> If we fail let us not quit in disgust . . .
> Lead us not into temptation, and deliver
> Us from the evils of integration.[4]

Navies has made no bones about the fact that he agrees with the poet's low regard for racial integration. In 1975 he declared that the goal of the schools should not be integration but "elimination of the privileges ac-

[4]As quoted in *The Jacket* (the Berkeley High School paper), Feb. 27, 1974, p. 2.

corded to whites over blacks." He characterized integration as a way of putting black children into white neighborhoods so that they learned "white values while losing their own identity." The decline in black hostility towards white children in the high school, he said, was a sign that blacks were becoming more "malleable" for a white society, with the consequences being a "loss in black identity and culture."[5]

Sentiments such as these did not fit in with the new Superintendent's philosophy. In the years since Wilson's appointment, some of the most extreme black militants were either transferred or they toned down their rhetoric, and some black studies classes were discontinued as the clamor against them from both black and white parents increased.

Adult Misbehavior. While turmoil and racism within the schools lessened during Wilson's superintendency, the penalties for many years of mismanagement remained to be paid. The financial crisis of 1975, besides provoking a teachers' strike (800 students never returned after the strike was over), forced the school district into a period of economic retrenchment which resulted in a resurgence of hate-filled rhetoric from political pressure groups.

The probability that the budget crisis would result in a large number of teacher layoffs meant that in accordance with the seniority system the most recently hired teachers would be the first to be fired. In other words, a majority of the teachers to be terminated would be from minority groups. When three members of the Board, all white, decided that as many as 122 teachers might have to be fired, the black militants went on the attack. Allying themselves with a number of white groups on the far left to form a Coalition Against Racism in Education (CARE) it gave the Board an ultimatum: no teacher layoffs or face the consequences. A hint of what CARE meant by consequences was a series of disruptions of Board meetings. At one meeting, in April 1976, CARE supporters and students, white and black, forced a 45-minute adjournment during which angry secondary-school students surrounded the two white Board of Education members present and insulted them while the two minority members of the Board looked on impassively.

These and other demonstrations were only a prelude to a June Board of Education workshop when 50 screaming CARE supporters—many of them white—waving signs calling the white Board members "rats", "pigs" and "Fascists", stormed the stage and pursued the white Board

[5]Interviewed shortly after these remarks appeared in the press, Navies seemed slightly subdued. He said he didn't have anything against integration: what he didn't like were the busing patterns (K-3 in the hills and 4-6 in the flatlands). "The black kids are bused out of their environment and asked to compete in a white environment that reflects whiteness."

members into a parking lot. Ms. Stoll, pushed and shoved as she tried to get into her van, abandoned her car and was followed by the crowd as she walked through the park. CARE leaders then issued a statement that they would prevent any more Board of Education meetings until the Board rescinded its decision to fire teachers.

However, at the next Board meeting, with police stationed out of sight backstage and with camera crews from Bay area TV stations at the ready, the CARE contingent contented itself with marching down the center aisle carrying signs informing the TV cameras that the white members of the Board were "Three Little Racist Pigs." When the white chairman of the Board, who had been a supporter of school desegregation, attempted to read a statement asking people to be orderly, he could hardly be heard. Only when he had finished his statements did the audience quiet down, at which point the Asian member of the Board attacked the chairman for "provoking" the demonstrators by his statement.

At no time during the several months when CARE was disrupting meetings did either the Asian or the black member of the Board come to the defense of their white colleagues. On the occasion when the crowd chased the white members out of the meeting hall, they stayed behind and chatted amiably with the crowd after it returned from its hunting expedition.

While these "mau mau" tactics had met with some success in the past, the CARE people had misjudged their opposition this time. The three white members of the Board composed a letter commenting on the disruptions of meetings and threats to their personal safety and mailed it out to all Berkeley citizens.

"In our view the entire process of representative government is threatened," the letter read.

> A small number of staff and community have physically disrupted almost every meeting for the past four months. They have prevented analysis of a budget which could result in the minimizing the impact of the enormous income reduction we face next year. They demand immediate rehiring of 122 laid off employees and promise "no business as usual" until we do . . . While drums beat and people stomp, and the two other members of the Board race-bait the three of us, hardly any of the 20,000 people who helped elect and reelect us show support for the things they elected us to do—to lead the district in a time of financial constraints, rethinking old ways and notions to keep these schools functioning in hard times. Indeed police protection has been required for our personal safety.

The letter asked recipients of the letter to come to future board meetings to "provide a stabilizing influence" on the proceedings.

This counterattack from the white members may have been partly responsible for the fact that subsequent board meetings were less disorderly. But in a sense the disrupters won their point. When the Superintendent later urged the Board to disregard the seniority rule and rehire a black guidance counselor ahead of three white counselors who had seniority, the Board agreed knowing that it was in conflict with state law and would most certainly provoke a court test by the teachers' unions which could cost the district as much as a half million dollars in legal expenses.[6]

As April 1977 approached, with two members to be elected to the Board, the financial plight of the schools worsened. Caught between the Superintendent's desire to cut down costs and severe political pressures to avoid layoffs of teachers no longer needed because of declining enrollments, the Board at first could not make up its mind what to do.

The Board finally solved the problem by authorizing the transfer of the surplus teachers into a child care program financed by a separate fund. The solution defused the conflict over teacher layoffs, and temporarily eased the district's financial plight. The move did not benefit children in the centers, since the transferred teachers had no experience with prekindergartners. The most startling effect of the transfer was to raise the cost of the center's operations by 1978 to $8,500 per child, almost equal to the room, board and tuition cost for one year at a major private university.

Even though the Board membership by 1980 had changed almost completely, the problems that had cropped up during the 1969–79 decade were getting more serious. The district's fiscal situation, always poor, continued to deteriorate even further with the passage of Proposition 13. The academic achievement gap between minority and Caucasian students had not been narrowed appreciably. And there were unmistakable signs that the school administration had not been able to cope with violence in the secondary schools.

Despite the presence of police on campus, criminal activity had been accepted by most students as a normal condition, according to a report prepared by a graduate student at the University School of Journalism in June 1979. After an eight-week study based on on-the-spot observation, and interviews with students, teachers, and administrators, the graduate student (a Berkeley High alumna) concluded that a high percentage of the students were apprehensive, had had experiences of being "ripped-off" or assaulted or who had known somebody who had been attacked or robbed. A considerable amount of the violence was blamed by one school administrator on outsiders. According to the students, much of the criminal activity was committed by their peers.[7]

[6]Later the Board backed down from its decision to test the seniority rule.

[7]Helen Benedict, "Violence at BHS-Authority Just Can't Cope," "Racial Ties To Student Violence," *Berkeley Gazette*, June 13, 14, 1979.

In spite of the financial mismanagement of the schools, inept administration of the experimental schools program, the successful efforts of a small band of black and white militants to influence policy by disrupting meetings, and the inability of the district to cope with violence in the secondary schools, by the end of the decade the teachers and children of all races were coming closer together. In fact the children, on the whole, behaved better than the grownups.

Some Berkeleyans took this as a sign that if the people at the bottom of the educational pyramid—the teachers and the children—can believe in the importance of what they are trying to do for one another, an educational system with deep roots in an enlightened past can endure and succeed in spite of confusion and misgovernment at the top. At least for a while.

12 The Berkeley Experience

The Liberal Disarray. The decade from 1968 to 1978 was a period of anger when many Berkeley citizens lost confidence in each other and ceased to respect their governmental and political institutions. It was a time in which a self-styled radical faction, proclaiming its outrage against the Vietnam War and the American establishment, appointed itself the conscience of the city. By not renouncing the short-term benefits of violence as a political weapon, the radicals destroyed the democratic dialogue which had been painfully developed since the city's beginning. The era of confusion that followed fragmented the community.

The politics of verbal and physical violence diverted attention from the task of running a city humanely and efficiently. Policy was replaced by propaganda. Matters of great urgency were neglected in favor of the staging of elaborate morality plays whose only beneficiaries were the egos of the actors. And the liberals, while not supporting, resigned themselves to the radicals' vendetta against the police, the conversion of City Council meetings into a stage for attacks on U.S. foreign and domestic policy, the successful attempt to portray a modest proposal for an industrial park as a struggle between the haves and the have-nots, and the unsuccessful endeavor to institute an affirmative action plan that was patently inoperable, racist, unnecessary and, as it turned out, unconstitutional.

While these and other ideological games were taking up the community's time, exposures of fraud in the election process produced no corrective action; gifts of public money were given to organizations of untested merit; a proper system of evaluating taxpayer-supported programs was not being developed; the administration of federally-sponsored programs

for housing, job-training, anti-poverty, and education was proving incompetent; violence and racism in the schools was being covered up or actually encouraged; the city's growing financial crisis was being misunderstood and treated with stop-gap measures; enforcement of city codes and ordinances was being neglected or applied inequitably; workable plans for balanced economic development and increased job opportunities were not forthcoming; and a number of the city's appointed boards were functioning irregularly, capriciously and often mistreating citizens who appeared before them.

It was inevitable that those in the ideological wing of the far left would show little interest in such problems. The issues were local, not susceptible to quick solutions, not easily dramatized as a contest between good and evil, hence not the stuff of which national media events are made. Concentration upon them would have required patience, something which the ideological left had in short supply. Finally, to redirect its energies towards the solutions of local problems would have required the left to compromise, to abandon its basic political strategy of polarizing the community around issues with a symbolic rather than a practical meaning.

In the end the radicals' strategy of polarization had the most disastrous consequences for liberals and radicals alike. What could have been a continuing and gradual transfer of power into the hands of younger people became instead a struggle which divided the old from the young over an issue on which the adversaries were in basic agreement: the injustice and illegality of the Vietnam war. Instead of resolving differences, confrontation politics exaggerated them and Democrats who had many things in common politically became strangers to each other.

What also became apparent was that the anti-war movement, no matter how great its moral force, was not of itself a sufficient base on which to build a political movement capable of governing a city. Those radicals—the pragmatists—who did understand this were not sufficiently in control to make their views prevail.

In the face of the politics of violence, the liberal Democrats did not fare very well. Although they had nominal control of the city government, the liberals lost their grip on the situation. The radical minority was able to determine the direction of debate because its council members and board appointees gave more time to their task and pursued a unified and effective strategy. Being in the minority was a decided advantage to the radicals. Without the responsibility that goes with power, the radicals were free to improvise, and to force the liberals to observe the radical agenda.

The liberals were neither as disciplined or as sure of themselves as the radicals. They were unwilling to insist that the rules of parliamentary procedure be observed or to force a showdown with the crowds of radical

supporters who disrupted these assemblies. In those instances where liberals did stand up to be counted, they were not often supported by their liberal constituency.

There was also the fact that many of the most astute of the liberals were people whose professional careers came first. They were not prepared to make the total commitment necessary to meet the radical challenge on a day-in-day-out basis. To the leading radical counterparts, it was an avocation. There were exceptions to this rule, too. But those liberals who did devote a lot of energy and time to politics very often came to the conclusion that they were wasting their time.

Another result of the politics of confrontation was that those people and institutions that had participated in the building of a community spirit and had been responsible for many progressive changes were ignored. Even within the radical movement older individuals who attempted to bridge the gap by joining the radicals were relegated to the sidelines. Nowhere was the New Left's attitude towards citizens who had distinguished themselves in liberalizing Berkeley's community life more apparent than in its selection of black spokespersons. White, middle-class radicals paid little attention to the views of people, left or right, in Berkeley's black community who had led the fight for decades against racial discrimination in Berkeley and the State of California. Instead the New Left, fascinated with the image of the Black Panthers, drew almost exclusively on Huey Newton, Eldridge Cleaver, Bobby Seale and other Panther militants when it wanted black speakers for the steps of Sproul Hall: exponents of armed warfare as a means of self-defense against a "Fascist" police force.

Confrontation politics also led to the neglect of other community resources which could not be conveniently mobilized to intimidate or coerce. Among these resources were the churches, the established social work agencies and service clubs, the school organizations like the parents' associations and teachers unions. The experience of these agencies, accumulated over a long period of time in dealing with many aspects of family and community life, was lost to the New Left.

Berkeley's religious institutions are places where people were made to feel welcome regardless of their politics or skin color. Many churches had achieved a racial integration in spirit that none of the city's educational or political institutions could equal. Both liberals and radicals could have benefited by an inquiry into how these churches were able to resolve internal problems without breaking out into open warfare. And had political organizations, right or left, paid more attention to the churches, they would have discovered that their congregations were often a much more reliable indicator of neighborhood concerns than the political activists who dominated public meetings.

Examples of agencies with long records of community service which were downgraded during the confrontation era because they were non-aggressive and non-political were the League of Women Voters, the School Resource Volunteers, Stiles Hall YMCA (which supplied hundreds of University student volunteers for non-profit agencies), and such service clubs as the Rotary International, the Lions, and the Kiwanis. The very fact that such organizations had a long history was a disadvantage during a decade when organizations more than 30 years old marked them as members of the establishment.

Another valuable community resource that was not used properly during the confrontation era were Berkeley's public employees, the people on whose skills depended the success of the city's policies in health, welfare, recreation, law enforcement, education, code enforcement, and housing. The information gained by these public employees by experience about all these aspects of city life was not very highly prized either by the radicals or the liberals. For the most part, the attitude of Berkeley politicians toward public employees is that they were expected to do their jobs and not voice their opinions on political matters.

This paternalistic attitude towards government employees is in keeping with the tradition, especially strong in Berkeley, of distrusting the professional and of exalting the role of the private, unpaid citizen in the formulation of government policy. Under this formulation, the professional is looked down upon as an insensitive bureaucrat, a time server, while the private citizen, as a disinterested amateur, is regarded as an individual with a keen sense of civic responsibility and given great power on the boards to which he is appointed.

Certainly lower echelons of Berkeley's municipal employees could not be blamed for the inept management of such federally subsidized programs as those in housing, job training, and those of the educational system's in alternative schools and bilingual education: these were directed by boards of unelected people or temporarily hired personnel. To observe or interview the city's social and health workers, policemen, court personnel, planners, and teachers is to find out a very high proportion are intelligent and considerably wiser about the needs of their clientele than the various policy-making boards which denigrate them.

This instinctive distrust of public employees had far-reaching effects. For one thing it gave added currency to the view that the City Council should function not only as a legislative body but also, in effect, as the executive branch of the local government, with the City Manager more often than not expected to function as an errand boy. This attitude contributed to the enormous backlog of unfinished Council business which has now reduced it almost to a state of impotence.

On the radical side, the distrust of professionalism was a symptom of a much larger phenomenon, a suspicion of authority per se. While this suspicion provided emotional fuel to the Left in its battles with the liberals, it hampered the Left's ability to resolve its own internal disputes and to develop a sharply-defined leadership. Radical Council members were very careful not to set themselves up as party leaders, preferring to act instead as instruments of the party will as determined by an amorphous web of committees and ad hoc political gatherings.

This widespread distrust of professionalism and leadership also explains why so many organizations in which radicals played a dominant role were at various times torn apart by internal dissension. The list is a long one: Bay Area Women Against Rape, the Berkeley Free Clinic, the tenants' unions, the left wing communes, the Model Cities Program, the anti-poverty program, radio station KPFA, the student radio station KALX, *The Daily Californian*, the Women's Health Collective, and the Berkeley Neighborhood Legal Services. Even the Berkeley CO-OP (a consumer-owned market) ran aground on political shoals with campaigns for officers revolving around whether to engage in such symbolic acts as contributing to the Black Panthers and boycotting non-union table grapes.

In a political atmosphere conditioned by such suspicion of one's allies as well as one's enemies, any working model of a participatory democracy was difficult to achieve. Far from increasing the voice of the individual citizen in public affairs, the exfoliation of special and mutually opposed interest groups generated a confusion that puzzled and depressed citizens of all shades of opinion. Democratic procedures were undermined by voting lists packed with the names of ineligible or non-existent voters. A measure to ensure that candidates would have to get a majority of the vote to get elected, by runoff if necessary, was defeated. The initiative process, intended to promote debate on carefully constructed programs more often than not became a vehicle for propaganda and unconstitutional laws.

It is impossible to calculate the cost to Berkeley, in human terms, of the destruction of the democratic dialogue. The energies of the people, abundant as they were, too often were dissipated in fruitless, never-ending arguments over minor matters, while great opportunities were lost.

One particularly sad example of such lost chances is the case of the California School for the Deaf and Blind, Berkeley's oldest educational institution. Founded in 1860, it is located on a beautiful multi-acre tract not far from the University campus. It has been regarded as one of the foremost institutions of its kind—a center where compassionate and skilled teachers and volunteers work with young people to overcome their handicaps and prepare them for a constructive life. Nearly 90 percent of

the school's graduates go on to college. The school has been a precious community resource, not only for its campus which is used by joggers and which provides day camp facilities and playing fields for neighborhood children, but also for its contributions to the larger Berkeley community. School personnel have cooperated with local school authorities in offering sign language courses for the parents of deaf children and for the deaf adults who have come to Berkeley because of the presence of the school.

A little more than half a dozen years ago, state authorities decided that many of the school's buildings, located near an earthquake fault, did not meet earthquake safety standards. The state was faced with two alternatives: rebuild the school or move it to another town. Obviously from the standpoint of the school the former alternative was infinitely preferable. Such a physical setting could never be duplicated elsewhere. Berkeley offered unparalleled cultural, educational and research resources; the staff and the children would not be uprooted; and the school could continue to serve Berkeley's community of deaf and blind people.

At first glance, it would have seemed that the city would have made strenuous efforts to keep the school (Berkeleyans have supported the reconstruction of public schools that have been found earthquake-prone). But in an especially revealing display of heartlessness, the Berkeley political community ignored the problem until it was too late: there were even some activists who wanted the school to move so that they could have a park in its place. Had the activists put as much effort into keeping the school as they had put into the campaign for traffic barriers, or denying a business permit for a MacDonald's restaurant, there would have been an excellent chance that the school would not have had to move. The city and neighborhood activists could have questioned the scientific basis on which the decision to move the school was based.[1] But for want of the community interest, the school and all that it had meant to Berkeley was transferred many miles away into a city that has nowhere near the resources that Berkeley has.

Only now have the neighborhood activists become interested in the School of the Deaf and Blind, or more accurately, in fighting over its remains. They now regret the school's departure because it has

[1]In November, 1979, information came to light that, had it been known earlier, would have in all probability obviated the necessity of moving the school. Instead of conducting a seismographic survey of the site, state education officials relied in 1972 on a US Geological survey made in the early 1960s showing traces of the Hayward fault running under the buildings. But a University of California draft environmental impact report released early in 1979 revealed that the only active fault lay at such a distance from the buildings that it posed no threat. Furthermore the EIR report concluded, the US Geological survey findings were "inferred," and not confirmed by any seismographic survey using samples of excavation and soil samples.

precipitated a bitter struggle over what shall be done with the site. The University wants to acquire the land from the state to build badly-needed student and faculty housing and administrative offices. The radicals are not sure what they want. Others do not want the University to have the land because it would increase traffic congestion and "student noise." So another Berkeley civil war has been launched, the type that goes on indefinitely.

The Need for Information. One of a free society's most important protections of its democratic institutions is an informed commentary on the state of public affairs by the leadership of political parties. In Berkeley's case, however, the system of nonpartisan elections worked against the development of vigorous political parties and leaders. Such being the case, Berkeleyans were forced to depend heavily on comment emanating from outside the political system.

Such sources of criticism would seem to be the press and the academic community with its wealth of specialists in the social sciences.

During the days of violence, the press focused almost entirely on the riots themselves, and when the disorders died down, the big Oakland and San Francisco dailies gradually withdrew their full-time correspondents from Berkeley and reassigned them elsewhere, just as newspapers usually do when a war comes to an end. This is perhaps understandable, in view of the fact that all three of these newspapers are becoming more and more regional in scope, which means that they have less and less space to devote to any one community in their circulation area. Consequently, in the last half dozen years, despite leadership on all three papers which recognizes the news potential of the University and the general Berkeley community, Berkeley no longer gets the attention it used to have in the sixties. The Bay Area dailies are no exception to the trend of big city newspapers everywhere to emphasize national and international news at the expense of inner city news. Part of the reason for this state of affairs is that cities have become regionalized.

Unfortunately, however, the people of Berkeley depend very much on at least two of these Bay Area dailies for news of their city. A professional poll conducted for the Berkeley Citizens Action in February, 1979, revealed that slightly more people rely on the *San Francisco Chronicle* for local news than they do on the Berkeley *Gazette*, with the Oakland *Tribune* coming in third.

Ordinarily this lack of comprehensive coverage of a single community in the big dailies would not be a serious problem because the local press would be expected to fill in the details. But the student-run *Daily Californian*, which by virtue of its exclusive free distribution on the campus has a

monopoly on student attention, generally has treated local issues—when it reported them at all—in an erratic, consistently biased fashion.[2] Consequently, the *Daily Californian* bears a heavy responsibility for the lack of communication between the academic community and the city.

The *Gazette* has not been able to fill the information gap for reasons having little to do with the quality of its reporting on local affairs. Despite its having been once edited by a man with arch-conservative views, the *Gazette* has performed creditably as a newspaper of record. Since that editor's departure, the paper has continued to improve the caliber of its reporting and build circulation with a small but able staff of reporters, some of whom are recent Berkeley graduates. But because of the *Daily Californian's* free distribution, the competition from the *Chronicle*, *Examiner* and *Tribune*, and the *Gazette*'s lingering but undeserved reputation for right-wing interpretation of the news, the *Gazette* is not widely read by the students and faculty of the university who would gain the most from its balanced reporting. Meanwhile, its financial difficulties have increased to the point where it had to cut staff and was being reorganized under new management (Ingersoll Publications).

Lacking, with the exception of the *Gazette*, a thorough press coverage of events, Berkeleyans were often not well informed enough to make wise choices, to be aware of the arrogance with which some of their governmental institutions treated the public, and to note the absurdities that characterized the public conversations of some Berkeley officeholders. A more informed electorate would have dealt more effectively with the small army of dilettantes that invaded almost every area of Berkeley's political life and contributed to its tone of general instability and nervousness.[3]

If the press was partly to blame for the information gap, so also was the University community. The general quality of its analysis of city problems was not very distinguished. What commentary there was tended to be intensely partisan on the part of a small fraction of the academic community. This was particularly true of campus commentary on such topics as

[2]The value of the *Daily Californian* to the Left is acknowledged by Sean Gordon, a former editor and now an assistant to Berkeley's new Mayor. Speaking to a meeting of *Daily Californian* staffers in August 1979, he stated that "without the *Daily Californian* editorial support we would have lost every city council election." In the 1981 city council election, however, the *Daily Californian* gave unbiased coverage to both sides, ran profiles of all major candidates, and printed long statements by them on the editorial page.

[3]Hedi Piel, a New York City Democratic leader a few years ago, explained the presence of such activists in the Reform Democratic clubs this way: "Where else could you get for six dollars in club dues the equivalent of a year of group therapy?" When the author repeated this statement during a U.S. Senate subcommittee hearing on the urban crisis in 1967, Senator Robert Kennedy broke into a wide grin, covered his face, and said, "I believe I should comment on that, but I won't."

the West Berkeley Industrial Park, housing issues, law enforcement, the disposition of Peoples' Park, general land use policies, and traffic control. Matters were not helped by the city's failure to make an extra effort to understand the needs of the University and the logic of its arguments for expansion to provide more student housing.

The scarcity of profound comment on municipal affairs from parties on both sides of the academic fence had far-reaching political results. The Left would not have been quite as successful in persuading students to approve the endless confrontation with the university and the city and the students had a sense of sharing with their fellow citizens. This sense of sharing never materialized.

Had the residents of the city had a greater comprehension of the depth of the university's contribution to the city, it might have eroded the idea that the university was something that had to be fought against—"institutional creep." The details of the ways in which hundreds of faculty and students every year contribute tens of thousands of hours to Berkeley's general welfare remain unknown not only to the public at large, but also to the university community itself.

Some of Berkeley's liberals and most of its radical leaders have gone along with the idea of the University as adversary—a tax-exempt institution which uses city services paid for by local taxpayers—because it affords them a scapegoat to blame for their failure to deal with the city's financial and housing crises. The University, for its part, has not been diligent enough in explaining itself: for example, it has published only once, in 1975, a complete inventory of its public service contributions (in a mimeographed form).[4] The fault for this state of affairs cannot be laid at the door of the university's public information office, which is one of the best. If anything, its role should be expanded to include journalists who could dig up news which under ordinary circumstances would never be reported.

[4]Public services of almost every academic department and graduate school were included in the inventory. A few examples among many; the School of Public Health contributed 138 volunteers and interns to a broad range of health agencies in Berkeley and the Bay Area region. The School of Social Welfare had 45 student placements in Berkeley and a total of 180 in Bay Area social agencies, the School of Education placed 35 students in various educational institutions, nearly all of them in Berkeley. The School of Optometry had a mobile sight-testing unit that served 600 persons in one year and 60 students who spent one day a week in community agencies. Especially notable for their contributions to research on local community problems or as interns with local agencies were the School of Forestry, Landscape Architecture, Environmental Design, Business Administration, Engineering, Criminology (now defunct), and the departments of Sociology, Political Science and Psychology, the Institute of Governmental Studies and the Cancer Research Center. This is in addition to the Stiles Hall YMCA and the University Y, also a source of student volunteers, and the University Police Department, which has given valuable cooperation to the Berkeley Police Department.

Some of this "news" would come out of the experiences and research accumulated by thousands of students and faculty over the years about Berkeley issues and institutions. Even when written up, this knowledge is not circulated widely.

The fact that the University has failed to communicate fully with the city is an indication of its own ambivalence. Despite its desire to be understood, there is a feeling that it should not apologize for itself—that, after all, it is a separate kingdom. Perhaps this attitude is inevitable in a university embedded in a metropolitan area which seems to be a constant threat to its individuality. A university seems always in danger of being too removed or too involved in the contemporary life of the larger community. As an aggregation of citizens, the university would seem to have a responsibility to arrive at an understanding of this outer community and participating in it intelligently. But as a community of scholars, the university must function as an independent center of thought. Such universities as Harvard and Yale have found it easier to maintain the air of sanctuary because of an architecture which, in effect, makes them walled cities and because their main source of support is private. But the students at large open-campus universities like the University of California are not sealed off in self-contained houses. Most of them live in the city and vote in large numbers in local elections. A few of them have run for office, some serve on municipal governing boards, and the Berkeley campus has been a staging area for political movements which have had far-reaching consequences for the city.

Under the circumstances, reason some Berkeleyans, they have a right to expect Berkeley's citizen-students to take the trouble to be as wise about the city as they are politically powerful. Not many university teachers in the social sciences would be willing to say that their students have that degree of sophistication.

This raises the question of what should be the proper posture of a modern university with regard to its local political and social environment. Perhaps it should resemble that of the anthropologist to the culture he is studying—alternately to detach himself, observing from a distance, then to draw close and participate. With this difference: in the case of the university the processes of withdrawal and involvement should be going on simultaneously and continually. It has not happened at Berkeley, this shuttling back and forth from the realm of experience to the world of theory and study. And, as a result, the University has had the worst of both worlds. In its semi-isolation it has not been able to protect itself from the intrusions that have upset its equilibrium. In its semi-involvement it has not been able to respond constructively enough to the legitimate political demands of the local community.

That the University has been caught in this bind is by no means entirely the fault of students, teachers or administrators. The traditional curriculum of modern universities, organized in short, self-contained courses, forces reliance on the textbook approach to social problems to the exclusion of broad experience in the field. In the natural and physical sciences, with lab work to go along with standardized texts, this is not so much of a problem. But in the social sciences, the heavy reliance on texts—bound to be outmoded—not only creates serious misapprehensions about the nature of the political process, but it also forces teachers and students alike into the habit of generalizing to avoid getting entangled in the messy details of particular situations that might contradict general propositions. Such an intellectual process is bound to result in all sorts of miscalculations, because in Berkeley as in other cities the particular situation is never adequately described by the general rule. Consequently, the habit of thousands of liberal or left Berkeley citizen-students in relying on some general axiom (tenants right, landlords wrong, etc.) as a guide to making political decisions simply increases the distance between them and their fellow townspeople.

Berkeleyans annoyed at this state of affairs sometimes ask why, if one of the most important functions of a university is to prepare its students to act circumspectly as members of a political and social community, the University is not requiring them to learn more about the city in which they live and vote. This is a question which remains unanswered.

It is important that the question be answered. Not to be informed about the true nature of the community in which one's last formal years of education are spent can mean that students will become ingrown and get a false picture of life by talking only to one another—a process which may prolong indefinitely their adolescence as political and social animals. This is what has happened to many members of Berkeley's academic community, teachers as well as students, and it partially explains why so many of them readily accept stereotypes of reality rather than comprehending the reality itself. The habit of ignoring what is going on outside the reaches of one's own particular island has other unfortunate consequences. Not only is such a habit hard to shake, but the illusions such a mental reflex generates are liable to persist for a long time, even permanently, after the student has moved to another community.

A Small Town. One of the most approachable members of the City Council is Shirley Dean, a small, bright-eyed woman who has the reputation of being the house mother of the neighborhood organization movement. A member of the Council's liberal Democratic wing, she likes to deal with people on a one-to-one basis or in small groups, and her affabil-

ity and willingness to concede her ignorance on some topics has helped her politically. (She is actually one of the more informed council members.) Her conversation is laced with details on all sorts of local matters. Because she is a strictly "local" person, she would get along well in any small town.

In Ms. Dean's opinion, Berkeley is a small town. "That's what I like about it. I like going down the street and seeing people I know." Some of her Council colleagues have the same attitude. The possibility of Ms. Dean's encountering people she knows in Berkeley, however, depends upon what street she is talking about. In many Berkeley islands that are very different from the middle-class neighborhood occupied by Ms. Dean, she might walk up and down the street all day long and see very few people she knew or who recognized her. When she talks about Berkeley being a small town she is referring to the intimate atmosphere of the neighborhood she frequents, geographically and politically, rather than the city as a whole.

Ms. Dean says she believes Berkeley is a very small town because she wants to believe that it is: she values the personal and casual give-and-take that typifies the social and political discourse in small-town America. She has a deep attachment to the single-family home that to her symbolizes a stable residential community. But small towns don't have $67,000,000 budgets, a 166-person police force, a large minority population, a community within a community of 28,000 university students, a high incidence of burglary, rape and other serious crimes. Nor do other small towns have their own Congressmen; a habit of turning to the federal government for financial aid; and systems of zoning, traffic control and housing codes which benefit one portion of the population at the expense of the other. Very few small towns would tolerate the disruption of public meetings which in the past few years became a habit of Berkeley.

This belief that Berkeley is a small town with small-town ways has some healthy consequences. It inspires a feeling of wanting to be close to one's neighbors. But it is also the root of many arbitrary restrictions designed to limit natural growth which set citizen against citizen, and have stunted the normal evolution of a city in the midst of a rapidly growing metropolitan region. The belief in a small-town Berkeley is responsible for the attitude that Berkeley can be governed by small-town methods—by a City Council whose members are meagerly paid for part-time services, and a myriad of city boards composed of citizens to whom public service has to be more of a hobby than a full-time and highly complicated task. If Berkeley chooses to continue with a governmental philosophy which says that citizens elected by the people shall have the responsibility of dictating the activities of the City Manager and his departments as well as setting

broad policy, then it cannot be served very efficiently by a legislative body that tends to exclude able people who have a living to earn. Ms. Dean is one of several Council members who agree that being on the Council should be a full-time job and that Council members should have much more in the way of personal staff support.

The desire to retain the ambience of village life in Berkeley is worth striving for. At the same time, if the city is to keep some of the qualities of a small town, it will have to respond intelligently, with the best minds it can enlist, to the pressures which are bound to modify its character. In the process some good things will be lost, but many will be saved. But Berkeley will have to be governed like the city it is, not like the small town that it isn't anymore.

Changes. That Berkeley has survived and in some ways prospered during its years of political disorder is proof of an iron constitution and a healthy childhood. Even during the rioting of the late sixties and early seventies there were small signs that the city was building up antibodies against the spirit of violence. The success of the Peace Brigade organized by Fred and Pat Cody, the bookstore owners, in keeping the May 30, 1969, mass parade around Peoples' Park peaceful was one reminder that the city had the inner resources to take a threatening situation and convert it into an expression of idealism that brought people together. While this moment of unity did not end the violence, it revealed a strong and spontaneous preferance for peaceful resolution of conflict. The only question was how long it would take for it to return to the spirit of the day in April 1968, when thousands of townspeople and students joined in Sproul Plaza in celebration of shared ideals in a silent tribute to Martin Luther King, Jr.

At first it appeared that by 1979 the radicals—from whose ranks had come many of the apologists for the violence of the sixties—had provided the critical impetus for the resumption of the dialogue. As time wore on, it became increasingly clear to the pragmatists on the left that the politics of confrontation would have to be modified, if not abandoned, if the movement was to broaden its base in the community.

Perhaps the turning point in the struggle over what direction the left would take came rather after its moment of utter defeat in 1977. The results seemed to say that the community had had enough of violent street tantrums and revolutionary rhetoric. So the progressives decided to form a political organization that would not be content to rely permanently on its old political base around the campus. The creation of a day-in-day-out headquarters under the control of people who were hard-working, patient and would listen marked a new era in radical politics.

What the pragmatists did, in short, was to form an old style social and

political clubhouse and adapt it to the promotion of fresh political ideas presented in a way that would appeal to people who had in the past been sympathetic but turned off by the rhetoric and the take-it-or-leave-it attitude of the idealogues.

This new strategy succeeded. In 1979 the BCA elected almost every one of its candidates and the Mayor by dint of a large, well-disciplined group of volunteers and a superbly designed leaflet and mail campaign that got out the faithful and quieted the fears of the opposition. The election also showed that the BCA was the only real political organization in Berkeley.

It appeared after that election that if the left were to promote a spirit of reconciliation in Berkeley and address itself to the city's financial crisis, it would be able to make great headway in the areas of the city that had been previously closed to it. The important results of this strategy would have been to reduce its dependence on the extreme left (privately referred to by some BCA leaders as the "anarchists") and raise the prospect that the BCA could build a community-wide movement comparable to the old Democratic caucus which took control away from the Republicans and elected blacks to high office.

There was no question that some radical leaders wanted to place matters ideological at the bottom of its list. At the top of the list were how to absorb the loss of $8 million in city revenues (due to Proposition 13's drastic cuts in property taxes) without cutting too deeply into community services; how to deal with a housing shortage and skyrocketing rents; how to expand job opportunities and attract new business into Berkeley's fading economy; and how to get along with the city's bureaucracy without being run by it.

But once in power, something happened. In 1979 after some very brief verbal gestures, the radicals abandoned their attempt to conciliate. They seemed to go out of their way to offend some of the very people that they needed to win over. It was as if they were still back in the days when a small, outnumbered group on the council had only the power to dissent. The conditioned reflexes generated by a dozen years of confrontation politics was apparently too hard to break.

When the Left gave notice that it was falling back into old patterns, the opposition showed it had learned a thing or two from the left about the art of disruption and the politics of prevention. A good example of the crudeness of the left followed by an equally crude response from the opposition was the treatment handed out by the Rent Stabilization Board (dominated by the radicals) to the one landlord on the Board. Instead of regarding him as a potential emissary to the landlords, they attempted to expel him—thereby confirming the impression that the Board majority was vio-

lently anti-landlord. This was all the landlords needed to justify their tactics: refusal to register as required by law and disruption of rent board meetings. So, suddenly, it all went out the window—the hopes for another radical success.

Questions. The Berkeley experience has a meaning that extends far beyond its own geographical boundaries. Although Berkeley has been regarded in various quarters as "far out," atypical, the history of its political and social evolution after World War II has parallels to many communities that bear little superficial resemblance to this city, the seat of a huge and volatile university. Despite its being "different," Berkeley has had to face the same problems, different in degree, that population centers all over America are having to cope with: how to control growth and at the same time maintain diversity; how to break down class and racial bigotry without substituting new forms of prejudice in their place; how to strike reasonable balances between legitimate contending interests; how to maintain fiscal solvency in an age of taxpayer's revolt without cutting desperately needed social services; how to build a political system and a governmental bureaucracy that is sensitive and at the same time competent and accountable; and how to establish a civil dialogue between people who are living on separate islands, strangers to each other.

In analyzing the Berkeley experience it is necessary to disabuse oneself of two fashionable, entirely opposite impressions of the city. One of these is the picture of Berkeley as a horrible example of what can happen when an army of communists, hippies, and soft-minded professors take over political power. Nothing like that ever happened, of course. If Berkeley lost its way for a time, it was not the doing of any single group. The second impression, studiously cultivated and believed by many Berkeleyans, is that the city has set an example for other communities to follow, that it is in the vanguard of social and political reform, the glowing conscience of America. This impression is as false as the other one.

If anything is to be learned from Berkeley's political and social history during the past decade, a study of its failures may yield as much wisdom as an examination of its successes—maybe because there were so many more of the former. How was a city able to resolve grave differences over the desegregation of its public schools and give its united support to such a grand experiment? Why did it allow that experiment to be so frustrated for so long by racist elements within those schools? How did the city effect such an orderly and sweeping change from a conservative philosophy of government to a liberal one that brought the black community into full participation in local affairs? What caused the destruction of that liberalism and the dialogue on which it rested? How did a city committed

to "participatory democracy" accomodate itself so readily to widespread abuses of individual rights and the electoral system? Why did so many of the city's inhabitants respond to economic and social pressures by sealing themselves off in tightly-contained islands? And how does the city go about the task of healing itself?

These are only a very few of the questions that should be asked, not only of Berkeley but of many other U.S. communities caught in the cross-currents of social, political and economic changes that transcend local, state and national boundaries. While Berkeley's experience does not provide anything like complete answers, it does offer insights as to how and how not to proceed, about what values are to be nourished, what traps are to be avoided. Perhaps the greatest lesson to be learned from the Berkeley experience is a more general one: that no community, no matter how gifted its people or how rich its intellectual and physical resources, can progress satisfactorily unless it puts those resources—*all of them*—to work continually, persistently, to maximum use.

In the last few years Berkeley did not succeed in doing this. Consequently its recent record does not compare favorably with other communities with a far less impressive range of resources and problems equally severe. The town of Vandalia, Illinois, for example, has survived the disappearance of many of its small farms by creating new job opportunities in small industries. The town of Westport, Connecticut, has strengthened its own town meeting system and increased its tax base by admitting headquarters of large corporations, without losing its identity as a progressive community in the face of pressures which have destroyed the quality of other suburban townships. The city of Oakland has managed to integrate racially its political establishment and important residential areas, modernize its port, and redevelop its downtown areas.

An even more important question, perhaps, that the Berkeley experience suggests is: What is it that transforms a population center into a community? It would seem that one necessity if the transformation is to take place, is of a moral and philosophical nature, having to do with a state of mind, a shared understanding of what is valued most, what sacrifices are to be made if necessary, and a clear concept of how to proceed.

The achievement of a shared understanding, and institutions and processes which will promote that understanding, cannot be accomplished separately. They are interdependent. Although institutional arrangements are the most visible means of making a city "work," how they function must depend upon the nature of the social compact—the prevailing idea of what is most valued. If there is such a prevailing idea, there is a good chance that even fairly primitive institutions can be made to operate humanely, democratically and even efficiently. If there is no such

commonly-held idea of community and accepted ground rules for its realization, even the most sophisticated institutions will falter. Many Berkeleyans have not realized this. They have tended to blame their troubles on institutions—their council-manager form of government, for instance, or their schools—and have wasted much time tinkering with them, instead of working toward the shared understanding which would infuse these institutions with new life.

At the same time, the attainment of this prevailing idea depends on institutions that will inform, educate and criticize, that will dedicate themselves to promoting the comprehension of the interrelatedness of things, an understanding of the fact that no problem can be solved without considering how such a solution would affect the social and economic balance of the whole. We seem to have finally approached an understanding of this when we deal with the problems of our physical environment, but our comprehension of the consequences of victories gained at the expense of one another upon the political ecology of our cities lags far behind. We are still back with the lawyers, playing the adversary game. The only way a community can come to an appropriate consensus is by a full and free communication of ideas among people of widely different backgrounds, something that at the present does not exist in a Berkeley of islands and enclaves.

In the final analysis, this undeniably liberal city's unlimited commitment to the spirit of free inquiry and a reluctance to invoke force promptly and effectively to maintain the democratic dialogue proved its undoing. Most of Berkeley's political and intellectual leaders, if they can truly be said to have been leaders in the city's time of crisis, were never able to draw the line—either through ignorance or a plain lack of courage—beyond which tolerance simply becomes a weapon in the hands of a political movement that does not believe in compromise or the dialogue, and is only too willing to countenance violence as a means of achieving its ends if necessary. These leaders, for the most part, realized too late that

> . . . in the steadiest of communities the struggle among ideas tends to become physical as it becomes prolonged; there is an incessant downtrend of debate toward the irrelevant exchange of punishments —malicious pressures, threats and bribes, broken windows and broken heads. Government is the only agency which, through its monopoly of physical force, can measurably insure that argument in speech and press will continue to be argument and not competitive injury. The elementary function of government in simply maintaining public order and the rights of person and property must be noted as the

cornerstone of free expression, inasmuch as the cruder menaces to freedom are always from within the community.[5]

Those few leaders on the right, center and left who did try to draw the line between a tolerance of dissent and a weakness in the face of violence found themselves isolated and unsupported from a city and an academic institution whose devotion to freedom of inquiry had been the equal of any community or university in the world.

The Berkeley experience was an object lesson of what happens to a community in crisis when the forces that dominate the public discourse become psychologically and politically ingrown, when there is not a full range of political philosophies vigorously competing against each other, and where there is no longer an abundance of good will. Until Vietnam helped destroy it, there was such a competition. The people conversed and learned from each other. And almost always after they had come to a collective decision they abided by the outcome. But the decline and eventual disappearance of the conservatives' participation in Berkeley public affairs—welcomed at the time by the liberals and the left—meant a great narrowing of the political complexion of the city to the point where Berkeley's Democrats (all of whom from liberal to radical would be considered to be of the extreme left in most communities) fell to fighting among themselves too often over issues of style rather than substance, about theory rather than practice, and about the removed rather than the local.

So what always happens when a community discourse is interrupted by violence and comes under the control of people who have a one-sided view of the world happened. Such a community "ceases to be mindful of itself, it is deprived of its spiritual unity, and, despite a supposedly common language, compatriots suddenly cease to understand each other."[6] For want of a diverse and civil exchange of views in a city that prided itself on its diversity, the struggle to maintain a truly responsive and democratic dialogue was lost. The citizens of Berkeley became the victims of their politics, not its beneficiaries.

[5]*A Free and Reasonable Press: A General Report on Mass Communication: Newspaper, Radio, Motion Pictures and Books.* Commission on Freedom of the Press, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1947), p. 114.

[6]Excerpts From A Nobel Lecture of Solzhenitsyn," *The New York Times,* Aug. 25, 1972.

Postscript

By the summer of 1982, certain things were happening in Berkeley that did not require a crystal ball to predict. Budget problems were tighter than ever due to a lack of federal and state funding. This in turn was leading to angry arguments among local organizations as to who would share in the sharply reduced municipal appropriations. Unemployment was rising as part of a national trend, particularly among black youths. The only way poor blacks in Berkeley could still hold on to what programs they had in the absence of county, state and federal grants was to have local government take up the slack. This the Council was unable to do.

The impact of the loss of funding was especially hard upon the public school system, already reeling from the effects of Proposition 13 (which cut real estate property taxes by as much as 60%). As services were reduced the flight of the upper middle class from public schools continued. This, combined with the natural enrollment decline due to a decrease in the birth rate, would necessitate the closing of some schools. This fact would provoke confrontations between parents and the Board of Education with the threat that if certain schools were closed, the parents would send their children to private schools. One of the by-products of this situation was that it upset racial balances.

In the political life of the community, there were conflicting signals. On the one hand, the surface tension between the various political groups seems not to have lessened: the Berkeley Democratic Club endorsed a challenger in the Democratic primary to a radical-endorsed incumbent, leaving a bitter taste that was not soon to be forgotten. There was the intervention of outsiders in Berkeley's affairs through the persons of Congressman Dellums and the Speaker of the Assembly (the latter threatened a "scorched earth" policy toward the dissident Democrats). And there was still the tendency for political differences to spill over into personal feuds, making life harder for all concerned.

On the other hand, on both sides of the political fence, an enlarged

sense of reality was leading to some interesting results. The first sign of this was a 9-0 vote on a new City Manager, an unprecedented step. He has proved to be an able administrator, a thoughtful man, and a person who deals with individual Council members as an equal, without any trace of subservience. He has spent many hours with each Council member in a hard-headed, practical manner attempting to break through the 5-4 political alignment on the Council—with occasional success. When he proposed a candidate for Assistant Director of Public Works, he was rewarded with another 9-0 vote as a measure of confidence.

Another interesting development occurred early in March when an emissary from the Berkeley Citizens Action approached a leading member of the Berkeley Democratic Club to explore whether they could agree on a candidate for Mayor suitable to both parties. The fact that such a proposal was even floated seems on the surface to be astonishing. But it is not so surprising when one considers that some BCA leaders have expressed their willingness to shed the extreme left to appeal more to the center.

But signs like these do not hearten Gilda Feller, a council member known for her political savoir faire. Ms. Feller says that she is worried about the future of Berkeley for an entirely different reason. She says that the initiative process, in the hands of single-interest groups, has gotten so much out of control that it promises to usurp the power of the legislative group on which she sits and to which she was elected. The situation has been made even more serious by the number of initiatives produced at every election. She thinks that it is hard for voters to be aware of the long-range consequences of what they are voting for and the sponsors don't want them to know. Now these initiatives are getting into such things as zoning problems, and Ms. Feller thinks they may get to the point of making certain items in the budget mandatory. The fact that many of these initiatives are sponsored by the extreme right or left adds another dimension to the situation: while the extreme right or left can't win elections in Berkeley they can, by use of the initiative, frustrate the will of the council.[1]

The Berkeley Tenants Union is an example. Not content with the provisions of the rent control they voted for originally, they introduced an initiative which would have tightened eviction controls and which would have jailed offending landlords, if need be. Some BCA leaders, who regard the BTU as ideologues and a thorn in their sides, were not at all happy about the initiative, particularly since the rent board was finally getting down to business under its old rules. On the other side, the BDC

[1]One of these initiatives, the Berkeley Election and Reform Act of 1974, which limited donations to ballot measure campaign contributions, was invalidated by the U.S. Supreme Court in December 1981 on the grounds that it violated free speech and association. The city of Berkeley was ordered to pay the plaintiffs' fees, amounting to $209,000.

was embarassed by the initiative of the Berkeley Property Owners Association to abolish the rent board and weaken or dissolve other portions of the law. In the end, the BTU initiative won out. Now the landlords are considering passive resistance, even to the point of going to jail. There is a probability that the law will be tested, in which case the courts will also be involved in the administrative and legislative process.

To cite another example, there is the problem of garbage disposal or solid waste management. For many years the city has wrestled with this problem, and as the years wore on it was left fewer and fewer options—new bay fill, for instance, is not permitted. This year the Council finally decided on a burn unit. This was opposed by environmentalists and recyclers and there is a chance that the Council's decision for a burn unit may be overturned by another initiative.

Partly as a consequence of the flood of initiatives, both organized parties have been forced to move closer together, if only for their protection as elected officials responsible for town government. It has led one prominent town official, newly arrived, to say "I've never seen such a conservative bunch of radicals."

One last note. What was left to be developed of the West Berkeley Industrial Park (with minor exceptions) has now been turned into a proposal for a 62-unit public housing development subsidized by a combination of state housing grants for construction and a federal grant for rent subsidies. Under Section 8, the federal government would guarantee that the tenants would not have to pay more than 25 percent to 30 percent of their monthly income for rents. If the local authorities can get final approval for the project and can get construction going by winter, the long battle will be finally over with happy results. If, on the other hand, there are protracted delays, then construction costs will have to be refigured and the project may not be feasible. One thing is certain, however. The original plan, to expand the tax base and provide many additional jobs, will not have been fully realized. Maybe it is a tribute to the elasticity of Berkeley politics in the last two years that finally something has been done which meets everybody's approval.

There is one place in another section of the West Berkeley Industrial Park where there is a thriving community of tub-makers, pottery shops, and other chic establishments. One of the proprietors is Denny Abrams, who operates a very successful establishment known as the Fourth Street Grill. It serves a clientele of fancy people including button-down business types with lots of money to spend. Abrams, who has for many years supported radical causes and was in the forefront of opposition to more parking spaces for the Bank of America, now has applied for more parking space for his business.

When he is taxed on the point, he responds:

"I can't help it. Success just ran away with me."

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This is Lyford's third book on American communities. His *The Airtight Cage: A Study of New York's West Side,* won the Sidney Hillman award for the best book on American social problems in 1967.

The Berkeley Archipelago

Joseph P. Lyford

Comments on *The Berkeley Archipelago:*

"This is a lively, caring and concerned account of the quality of life in Berkeley, California. Through colorful, perceptive vignettes of persons and events, Joseph Lyford tells us of politics and policies, neighborhoods, schools, race relations, the police, tenants and landlords, radicals, liberals and assorted ideologues off and on campus. Lyford's sobering conclusion — that the uncivil conduct of symbolic politics subverts a sense of community and undercuts effective civic leadership — is relevant to all levels of American politics, national, state and local."

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